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WAR MEMORIES

"Oh! the Life of a Doughboy" (See p. 63)

WAR MEMORIES

BY

FRANK A. HOLDEN

(2nd Lieutenant, 328th Inf., 82nd Division)

With an Introduction by

LUCIEN LAMAR KNIGHT, LL.D., F.R.S.

State Historian of Georgia

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most delightful things in life is to be the herald of a happy event—the message-bearer of a welcome bit of news. The writing of this little introduction, therefore, is less of a task than of a privilege; for its purpose is to inform the public that a little volume which Americans have long been eager to read—have long been anxious for some one to write—has at last appeared. I make this statement, not without a due regard to the meaning of words, and not without some, nay, much, of the gratification which the old Syracusan philosopher must have felt when he exclaimed: "Eureka! Eureka!"

Here it is:—a little book which reflects upon every page the intimate heart-life of the American boy in France, during the World War—what he saw and felt and thought and did, not only in the great crises of battle; but on the march and in the camp—setting forth the first impressions made upon a soldier's mind, under foreign skies, at the cannon's mouth, and revealing the fact that everywhere and always his thoughts were of the dear ones at home, thousands of miles across the seas.

It is like a mirror in its faithful reproduction of the simpler elements which enter into vast and splendid scenes. We have heard much of general movements; of grand climaxes; of superb exhibitions of man-power, in the aggregate; of millions, upon one side, confronting millions upon another; and so vast has been the picture presented to our minds that we have utterly failed to grasp it, except in its outstanding characteristics. We have heard too little of the human side of the great war—too little of

the things which carry a direct appeal to the deep heart of America. We have been hungry for the minor details—for the smaller threads—for the fragmentary episodes and incidents—for the rare and delicate and tender touches of color which are needed to complete the picture, and to give it beauty, pathos, power and charm.

Ever since, in the lone solitudes of the night, we first began to wonder where our boys were, on the other side—if they were still safe—we have longed for such a book; and so far as our personal observation extends it is the very first book of this character to appear in print, on either side of the water. The experiences of one soldier are not unlike those of another; and every fond parent who reads this book will feel that his or her boy is writing, though it may be that his spirit now looks down upon them from the unseen halls of the Great Valhalla.

The author has not attempted an epic. His little volume is not, in any sense, a romance of chivalry;—it is merely a little memorandum book in which he has penciled his recollections, while these were still fresh in mind, and to keep the bright tints from fading, as they were otherwise bound to do, with the lapse of years. There is no grasping after effect; no hint of pedantry; no suggestion of melodrama; no obsequious fanfare of trumpets. He follows the example of Othello, in "The Moor of Venice;" and, in spite of perilous encounters, in the imminent, deadly breech, hair-breadth escapes and moving accidents, both on field and on flood, he would still—

"a round, unvarnished tale deliver."

In a straight-forward manner, therefore, he narrates his story, beginning with tearful leave-takings and ending with joyful welcomes back to the home-

land. Like a song-bird, in an English hawthorn, he gives us the melody with which his soul is charged, and he pours it forth in an unpremeditated lay.

Aeneas, at the court of Dido, in depicting the scenes of the Trojan War, makes use of the grandiloquent expression: "much of which I saw and part of which I was." He also calls himself the "pious Aeneas;" and he speaks of his renown as reaching above the stars—all of which, if true, might well have been left unsaid. The author of this book was the spectator of scenes far more sanguinary than those which were staged on the plains of Troy. He saw huge monsters of war which dwarfed the wooden horse to a mere insect; and he fought upon fields which decided the fate, not of a single empire, but of many, and which affected the whole future of two great hemispheres. Where the fighting was heaviest, Lieutenant Frank Holden was on hand. But his thought is never upon himself; and, with characteristic modesty, he seems to shun rather than to court the lime-light, even when compelled by the exigencies of the narrative to use the personal pronouns. There is no offensive egotism. He puts aside the temptation to exploit himself, as he does the temptation to indulge in high-flown rhetoric. He is satisfied merely to inform the reader that he was there, and he wisely leaves to others the task of depicting scenes, which might have baffled a Dante or a Salvator Rosa.

To those of us who live in the sunny latitudes of the United States, between the Savannah and the Chattahoochee Rivers, it is pleasing to reflect that the author is one of us—a Georgian to "the manner born." Pride of kinship and of old acquaintance surges warmly in our veins as we read the gentle

narrative before us and realize at every turn of the story that while the author never indulges in heroics, he is none the less a hero. Five times recommended for promotion by superior officers, under whom he immediately served, and commended by them for his devotion to duty and disregard of personal danger, his record is one in which his family may well delight and of which his friends, in every walk of life, are jusitfiably proud.* On September 13th last, in the State Democratic primary Lieutenant Holden was chosen one of Clarke County's two representatives in the State legislature of Georgia, leading the entire ticket. Of the total vote polled for representative of 2325 he received 1999, something almost unprecedented in a contest of this character.

Lieutenant Holden is a scion of one of the State's oldest households, from both sides of which he is the inheritor of fine traditions which he has gallantly sustained. His father, Judge Horace M. Holden, has ably served on the state's Supreme Bench. His mother, who was a Corry, is a grand-niece of the Great Commoner, Honorable Alexander H. Stephens. Not only in accent but in action—in dignified demeanor—in manliness of bearing—in every thought which gives an impulse and a character to conduct—he exemplifies the very highest type into which our race has flowered—the Southern Gentleman. Those lines of Bayard Taylor are undoubtedly true to truth; and they are happily illustrated in our young Hotspur:

> "The bravest are the tenderest,
> The gentle are daring."

As for this little volume, it is sure to lift the latch of many a home in America, and to tug at the heart-

strings of thousands of readers. Though an unpretentious book, it may, for this very reason, and because all unconscious of its mission, win a very definite and distinct place, if not an exalted one, in the literature of the World War. Comrades of the author will read it, because its interesting pages recall the experiences which they all shared in common. It will appeal to libraries, because, in an unconventional way, it deals with a topic perennially fascinating and emphasizes qualities of hardihood, of endurance, and of soldiership which are peculiarly American; but, best of all, it will appeal to the firesides of the land, at many of which there are vacant chairs, and over all of which there are memories of sacrifice, of suffering and of heroism. The fact, too, that the author comes of distinguished Confederate stock will help to strengthen the bonds of unity; for his book is a noble contribution to the sentiment of a re-united country and of a people, now one forever.

LUCIAN LAMAR KNIGHT.

Atlanta, Ga., September 15, 1922.

*(Note). In the Officer's Record Book of Lieutenant Holden appears the following:

"Argillieres, France, Feb. 25, 1919. Lieutenant Holden performed especially valuable service during the severe gas shell attack at Norroy, France, Sept. 14, 1918. His attention to duty resulted in fewer casualties in the regiment.

Richard Wetherill,
Col. 328th Infantry."

"Lieutenant Holden was an officer in the second Battalion, 328th Infantry, for six months, joining just before the regiment sailed from the United States. I commanded the battalion during this period. I have twice recommended Lieutenant Holden for promotion. His service was characterized by marked loyalty, devo-

tion to duty, disregard of personal danger and intelligent accomplishment of every duty assigned him. He has been a platoon leader, assistant battalion adjutant and battalion gas officer. As gas officer, he performed services during a heavy bombardment of gas shells in the town of Norroy on Sept. 14, 1918, which I believe saved the lives of many officers and men in his battalion. Lieutenant Holden's cheerfulness and fine enthusiasm were at all times in evidence and had real effect upon the morale of all ranks in his battalion.

G. Edward Buxton, Jr.,
Lt. Col. Inf.U.S.A."

"Lieutenant Holden from the time of his affiliation with the 328th Infantry has been assigned to H company, 328th Infantry, except when on detached service. I have found him very diligent in his duties when connected with the company, inspiring his men at all times by his personality and bringing out the best in them by his devotion to duty and disregard of his personal safety. On October 8, 1918, when I was in charge of the battalion, Lieutenant Holden was given the most dangerous and important duty of bringing food to the men of his battalion over a heavily shell swept road. This officer, realizing his very responsible position, labored day and night at this difficult task, and with marked intelligence, devotion to duty, and marked cheerfulness, succeeded in bringing the first food to the 328th Infantry in the Argonne fight. As captain of Company H, 328th Infantry, I recommended him for promotion twice, and while acting as battalion commander I recommended him again. Lieutenant Holden, by his diligence and accomplishments has won a mark of high esteem from both the officers and men of the Second Battalion, 328th Infantry.

J. M. Tillman,
Maj. 328 Inf."

THE American Red Cross was the last to wave us good-bye from American shores and the first to greet us in foreign lands. This cross was seen on the fields of battle while the fight still raged, and on the arms of first aid men as they rushed out to get the wounded; it appeared on the ambulance as it made its way over the shell-torn roads; and it waved in brilliant splendor from close up hospitals under enemy fire. The Red Cross dressed the wounds of battle and touched our feverish brows with the gentle affection and tenderness of a mother's hand. It's the nearest thing akin to a mother's love. The rays of light which come from it are not unlike those which shine from the Cross of Calvary. And it still shines forth today in peace time; it still "carries on."

To the
American Red Cross
this book is dedicated.

PREFACE

The ex-service man has little to say about his life in the army, but who knows how often pictures of the days that used to be pass before him?

A boy in the city stares out of the office window, his ears deaf to the noise of the clicking typewriters. Pictures of far away France come before him and back to work he goes.

In the crowded streets among the moving masses the ex-service man passes and crosses here and there. Memory pictures of the battlefields of France are flashing through his mind.

Down in the corn field by the river a lonesome boy follows the plow. The stillness is broken now and then by a Bob White calling to its mate and the end of the row awakens the boy from his dreams of war days.

What memories we have of it all! And before these memories are dimmed or faded I have written mine out, gathering many of the details from letters I wrote home. My memories are similar to those of hundreds of thousands of other American soldiers.

You will find some sentiment in what I have written, but without sentiment the wheels of progress and march of armies would stop. I have given some of the human aspects of the war. There are many interesting incidents in the experience of numerous friends about which I would like to write, but which, for the lack of space, I am compelled to omit.

The personal pronoun often occurs. This is not a history of the war but simply a narrative of my experience and that of others observed by me and when originally written was not intended for publication.

THE EX-SERVICE MAN

IT was not until we were at sea, well on our way across the Atlantic, that we really began to think and wonder. We had been dazed and hypnotized by the grandest "send off" ever accorded any departing soldiers in the history of nations. Every goodbye came from laughing voices. Forty-eight states bubbling over with goodbye smiles made our country one great blaze of sunshine. But now, way out on the deep, we came to ourselves, for we had time to think as we journeyed across. We began thinking of the days when the war would be over. My! would it not be wonderful when the soldiers returned after going so far away to fight!

After we landed in England and France, we began to appreciate our own country. Our thoughts, while in the trenches and while in rest billets and during that period after the Armistice when we waited and waited so long for our sailing orders, were often of what we were going to do when we got back to the New World.

When we returned, the first few days at home were well-filled with greetings by the people who were glad to see us back safely. The first few nights at home were spent telling of our experiences and

showing souvenirs, if we were lucky enough to have brought any home.

But after that, what? We did not know or realize while overseas that most of our people back home had thrown every ounce of energy they had into helping win the war. They had bought Liberty Bonds, had made drive after drive, worked without ceasing for the Red Cross, and the various other organizations, and had denied themselves many things and made numerous other sacrifices of which we knew nothing. So while we were dreaming of the days when we would arrive at our homes we never dreamed that we would return to a people who were war-sick and worn, too. Thus we did not enjoy telling our war tales as we thought we would and our people did not enjoy hearing us talk war as we expected. But back of it all there is something not to have been anticipated about the returned soldier. He is restless but quiet.

We felt on our return "let down" and disappointed over something. What that something is, I do not know. I wish I did. We criticise no one for it. I would not go two blocks now to hear Lieutenant Rene Fonck, the French ace, tell how he downed three German planes in twenty seconds, or tell of his experience in downing seventy-five planes officially credited to him, and the forty others that he claims.

I would not go two blocks to hear Sergeant Alvin York tell of how he killed twenty Germans and captured one hundred and thirty-two, and I doubt if there are many others who would.

At the age when we were just in the first steps of manhood, the time when we were beginning our life's work either in the professional or business world, or on the farm, just at this most critical point in life, we gave it all up. We crossed the large body of water that we studied about in the primary grades at school, never dreaming then that we would ever be able to sail this big sea. Some of us saw one ship carry as many as ten thousand soldiers. Some of us saw army camps and railway systems and many other things established on a large scale in a short time by our government in a foreign land. Some of us saw sights of which we had never before heard; saw hundreds of airplanes circling high over the front lines; saw airplanes fight and watched them fall; saw observation balloons go up in smoke; saw our friends killed and wounded; saw an entire division move over a hundred miles from one front to another in one day by trucks. Some of us saw Paris and most of us saw our great metropolis, New York. Seeing all these things and many more besides, being on the move most of the time, made us feel when we re-

turned to our ordinary routine duties, a "let down" that was rather hard on some of us.

Go through our western states and you will find many ex-service men who have gone there from other sections since receiving their discharge. Ask them why they are out there and they will tell you that they are restless and discontented. Of course, there are some exceptions.

I know of a captain who went through the stiff training at the First Officers' Training Camp where he received a commission. He was in charge of a company through eight months of the long and tedious drill schedules at Camp Gordon. He rode and hiked over many miles of England and France. He experienced over three months at the front in the Toul sector, he carried his company through the St. Mihiel drive, and a month later the German artillery wounded him as he was leading his men into the Argonne fight.

This captain had all the adventures that American soldiers experienced, and yet Captain Will King Meadow of Athens, Ga., was at work in his office a few days after he returned home and has been at work ever since just as if he had never heard of the war.

Now you may say that is what all the ex-service men should have done. You are right, and it would

be fine if they could do as Captain Meadow has done, and they would if they could.

I know boys who never experienced any of the horrors of the fighting; boys who never even went overseas, whose stay in the army has unfitted them for their life's work which they had studied and prepared themselves for and they cannot settle down to such work. Some will get over this, but a great many will never outlive it; and where you will find one like this ex-captain I have just written about, you will find hundreds who are so restless that they are miserable.

I WANT TO GO BACK

Life sometimes seems rather strange and queer. We try to plan our future, what we would like and what we expect to enjoy and then everything turns out so differently. How we disliked to be in France during those weary months after the Armistice (except when on leave.) That was when we were waiting so long to start back home, when the hours that dragged by seemed like days. But now ask the ex-service man how he feels about going back. More than likely he would say that he would like to go back in civilian clothes and see France in peace time.

And now I want to go back.

I want to catch the largest steamer that crosses the Atlantic. I want to stand on the front and watch the big ship split through the waves and look out over the deep as far as I can see and have the consolation of knowing that I am sailing through safe waters where I once sailed through troubled seas, with no dread now of the submarine lurking near.

I want to go back and see the wonderful French people, the people that we called slow, the people with whom we would at times get provoked—yes, now I want to see them again. Their endurance, suffering and trials were unequaled by any other nation that had a part in the war. The morale and high spirits they held throughout when the enemy was almost at the gates of the heart of their republic should always be remembered as one of the greatest factors in winning the war.

I want to go back and see Paris during peace time. I saw the great paradise of pleasure seekers at a time when the outlook seemed dark and gloomy for the Allies, when the enemy was still gaining ground toward the city and the long range guns were registering hits inside its walls. I saw no signs of grief or despair or poverty in the city of millions during this great crisis. If their morale had broken and if their spirit had weakened then all the sacrifices they had made and all the brave fighting of

their sons would have been for naught, and the Crown Prince would have had the pleasure of choosing from the many chateaux in the city a place for his mansion, and many more American boys would be sleeping far away from their birthplace. The bright and cheerful spirit of the French in their capital city cannot be praised too much. Now I want to go back and see this city again and be thrilled with its peace time gaiety and fun.

I want to go back to the little villages where our battalion was billeted, in the back areas not far from the front. These little villages were almost deserted then. I want to see the same villages and see how they are getting back to normalcy. I want to see the few old inhabitants who stayed in these towns, the old men and women who were so nice and polite to us. I saw so many of them doing work that they seemed too old to do, as they were at an age when they should have finished their hard labors on this earth. I want to go back now and see them again.

And, too, I want to go back to the battlefields—the frontiers of freedom. I want to go back to Xivray where I first went into the trenches. Once it was a village but then a mass of fallen buildings—not a house standing in the town, and our trenches ran through the main street. I want to go back and be able to walk through the village in day time and

then walk out into No Man's Land in broad daylight. I want to go back and go again on top of that high mountain, Montsec, that the enemy held just in front of Xivray. This mountain stood in front of us like a giant standing over a small boy and it was our horror for many months until captured in the St. Mihiel drive. For miles around the Germans could see every movement we made in the day time from their observation post on this mountain.

I want to go back to Verdun and see the city once again where the French fought as no people ever before fought. From Bar Le Duc hundreds of automobiles, trucks and taxicabs carried thousands of soldiers over the good military road to Verdun where they got out of these conveyances on the run, and rushed against the Germans with the ever living motto in their hearts, "*They Shall Not Pass.*"

I want to go back to the village of Norroy and talk with the inhabitants that were hid in their cellars when we went into the town on the night of September 13, 1918, and delivered them from four long years of bondage and horror.

I want to go back and ride over the roads in the Argonne Forest where for two days and nights I was under almost continuous shelling.

But most of all, I desire to go back and see the graves of our "boys who did not come back,"

graves of our comrades who were cut down just as their life's work began. Their work is finished now and with their task well done let us hope that their monuments will ever stand as the last monuments of war, and that the light of their sacrifices will ever shine forth, not only for the present generation, but for generations and generations, for the millions yet unborn, forever and forever.

LOOKING BACKWARD

Now, I am thinking of the days to come, but later when I get to the age where one enjoys looking back over the road already traveled, more than looking ahead, I want to get out this little book and read it over and live once again the days I spent while an American soldier and recall to mind once again the pictures the details of which I may forget unless I jot them down now while they are so fresh. If you are still tired of war stories, when you have read this chapter, put this little book away on the shelf and maybe in the years to come it will fall into some old gray-haired World War veteran's hands and perhaps it will serve as some company and comfort to him in his old age as I expect it to be to me when I am in the evening of life.

Of course, we had our trials and hardships, many long road marches with heavy packs, many long days and nights of home sickness, but of these things I

will not write much. When we recall the past our minds are usually filled with memories of the pleasanter things in life. We soon forget our sufferings and so it is with our experiences in the war. Whenever you hear the old boys talk over their experiences together they will bring up something that will cause a smile or a laugh and even if something is said of that long march out of the trenches in the rain someone will speak up and say: "Yes, and you remember that old fat boy who left his equipment and had to go back a quarter of a mile and get it." We will laugh about it now but it wasn't funny then.

I have never forgotten the talk the Dean of the Law School at the University of Georgia gave us the day before our graduation. He said that we were entering upon a profession of hard work, worry and sometimes disappointment, and that our work involved the worries and troubles of others, carrying with it a great deal of responsibility. As we sat there on the eve of our graduation and heard this lecture, we could not help feeling a little blue. The more Professor Sylvanus Morris talked the bluer we got. Near the end of his lecture he paused and silence reigned through the room. "Gentlemen," he said, "you will find that what I have just told you is true, but I wish to say this to you before you leave these halls. A lawyer may have all the worries and trou-

bles and responsibilities that I have just told you of, but there is one good thing about lawyers and that is they can have the darndest best time of any class or set of men on the globe when they get together."

What he said I have always remembered and I have often times thought how it applied to the ex-service men. I can not talk interestingly about my good times overseas, but let me meet with an old pal who was over there and we can have the darndest best time of any two people that can get together.

TRAINING CAMP

On April 6, 1917, our freedom loving country, with over a hundred million souls far away from the horrors and sufferings of the great European struggle, declared war on Germany and entered into the great conflict which would make it a World War. Our country, with a small regular army, whose people had bled on their own soil in a war that had cemented them together, forming the greatest nation on earth, was now to throw its great forces of men and supplies into the struggle overseas.

At this time I was practising law with my father in Athens, Georgia, just a few months out of a law school. The War Department planned many camps to be established for the purpose of training men to

officer the large forces the United States would throw into the war. One of these training camps was located at Fort McPherson, Atlanta, Georgia, to which I reported on the opening day, May 11, 1917.

When my mother hung the service flag in my father's office there were two stars in it. Albon Reed, who had been practising law nearly two years with my father, left for the training camp the same day I did. Albon was married and did not have to go but when the bugle blew he was with his friends in khaki and when the last shot in the World War was fired Captain Reed had fought with the 82nd Division in all its battles.

Some who read this book may not know all whose names I mention, and some may not know any of them, but when I refer to a soldier by name, remember it makes this little story real, and when you read of the boys I have mentioned there may appear in your mind a boy that you know—a friend of yours—perhaps your boy.

The training camp was filled with men mostly from Georgia, Alabama and Florida. It seemed to me like a reunion of my old college mates as there were so many University of Georgia graduates in the camp. Little did we think while we were in college preparing to fight the battle of life that after our college days were over so many of us would meet again

in another school, this time to train and prepare to fight a real battle of life—the battle for world freedom.

Among these old college chums was Bob Gunn. Bob and I grew up together in the little village of Crawfordville, Georgia. There we played together long before we entered the first grade in school. We were freshmen together in college, room mates and class mates, and now we were in the training camp together in the same company, in the same squad, marching side by side in the drilling, and bunked next to each other. I never thought then that in a little over a year from that time this same Bob would write his mother the following letter from the famous Argonne Forest:

"France, October 15, 1918.

"I am right close up now. Am mingled all in the woods (forest) with the 82nd Division. Haven't seen Frank yet and poor boy I fear for him. I saw poor little Carl Goldsmith's resting place yesterday. Gee, but the boys are shot up bad."

An extract from another letter of Bob's to his home folks two days later is as follows:

"I know right where Frank's company is and I am going to it tomorrow and see what has become of Frank. If I find him there well and happy we will cable home of the happy reunion."

Men gathered in officers' training camps from every walk in life. Some had previous military training, some had never drilled a step. Some were paupers, some were millionaires. At night our tired bodies readily gave way to sound sleep; at early morning the bugle started us on our daily grind. The closing hours of the day were refreshed by visits of relatives, friends and sweethearts at retreat.

Three months of it! And then all but a few were commissioned officers in the United States Army; most of the few not commissioned attended second training camps and some of these were commissioned higher than some of their associates in the first camp.

CAMP GORDON

We received our commissions on August 15th after three months of intensive training. I was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. We were given a twelve day leave at the expiration of which most of us were to report to Camp Gordon, Atlanta, Georgia.

Camp Gordon was filled with men mostly from Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee. After five or six weeks training the majority of these men were transferred to National Guard Divisions in order to fill them to war strength and the last of October we began receiving men from the northern camps.

Thus the 82nd Division that proved later to be one of the big factors in making American history abroad was undergoing intensive training with boys from the North officered by boys from the South.

We had an unusually cold winter. The northern boys said they had often heard and read of the "Sunny South" but really felt the cold more after their arrival at Camp Gordon than they ever did in the North. It was cold and damp, which made the atmosphere most penetrating.

Sometimes I think we over-trained or rather I should say we over-drilled. We had too much "squads right" and too little of actual war training. That was demonstrated when we arrived in France. My division was on the British front at first and we learned a great deal about training from the British. We learned that the British soldiers were always full of pep. Drilling never became a bore to them, mainly because most of their training and drilling was conducted by playing games, thereby stimulating interest and competition.

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT

I had been through the First Officers Training camp where we drilled through the hot summer months as much as we could stand. Then at Camp Gordon,

where reveille got us up with the sun, we drilled until the sun had run its day's course and were heartily tired of drilling.

It was during the dinner rest hour (the last of March, 1918) that I received an order from headquarters saying that Captains R. L. McWhorter and F. D. Fuller and Lieutenants Henry West, J. M. Burke, L. C. Atkins and I were detailed as special instructors to aid Colonel Percy Trippe in training the University of Georgia (my University) students during their annual encampment at Gainesville, Georgia. You can imagine how glad I was when I received this order.

The first morning of the camp the students were assembled in front of the Riverside Military Academy barracks and I gave them their first "setting up" exercises.

I had stood during the four preceding years many times on the athletic field before the students of my University in the varsity uniform and had been thrilled through and through when the air all about me vibrated with thousands of hoarse yelling voices aided by the college band playing that grand old piece, "Glory, Glory to old Georgia," but this never thrilled me as I was thrilled that Monday morning when I stood before the students of my Alma Mater in the uniform of my country. I noticed when I

called the men to attention I was looking upon a sea of stern faces. The happy smiling faces that are so characteristic of college boys were for a while changed to serious expressions for they realized their country was at war.

The camp ended on Friday. I went by home on my way back to Camp Gordon. Soon after my arrival my mother insisted that I should have my picture taken in uniform. After the picture was taken she showed me a telegram from General Burnham saying that I was to report to the division without delay, which meant that I would soon leave for overseas. My mother would not tell me that I would so soon leave for France until after the picture was taken. Just like a mother.

When I reported back to Camp Gordon I received an order transferring me to the 328th Infantry and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion under Major G. Edward Buxton, Jr., (later Lieutenant Colonel) of Providence, R. I.

SAYING GOOD-BYE

So many boys never had the opportunity to have a "good-bye talk with the home folks" before they left for France.

A friend of mine, Ralph Flynt, of Sharon, Ga.,

enlisted on April 2nd, 1918. In 18 days he was on his way to France.

Ralph was assigned at Camp Gordon to my regiment, but I did not know he was in the army until about two months later when I saw him one night bringing food up to the front line trenches in France. He was with me in the Argonne drive and I watched him as we carried ammunition and food for two days and two nights over the almost continuously shelled roads of the Argonne Forest. And let me say here that the nearest thing I know to a perfect hell on this earth was the shelled roads in the Argonne Forest. If Ralph had received a year's military training he could not have been a better soldier. He was in France a month and a half after entering the service. When he left the States he did not know "squads right" from "right shoulder arms," but he felt he was a part of something great—the army of the greatest nation on this earth, and was filled with a determination and spirit to become a good soldier for he knew he was following the Stars and Stripes on a foreign battlefield representing a hundred million people who never heard and who will never hear the American eagle scream for help or see "Old Glory" trail in the dust. With this feeling in the hearts of the American doughboys no wonder they

were soon able to meet in equal strife the best shock troops of Germany.

The American boy needs but little training to make a good soldier. We need only a small standing army though we need a goodly number of trained officers and non-commissioned officers.

Ralph Flynt, as I said, was just one in many thousands of boys who went over untrained but outfought the Kaiser's trained forces. And he was one of the many thousands whose "good-byes" were received by letters after they arrived on the other side.

But not so with me. I was very fortunate. Our happy family, my father, mother, brother Howard and sisters, Mary, Queen, and Frances, and I ate dinner together and soon thereafter gathered in a room at the Piedmont Hotel in Atlanta on the night of April 19, 1918, my last night in Atlanta before leaving for France. My brother would occasionally break the silence by his humor but just before he and I left the room there was a long silence. You know without my telling you what this silence meant. After this silent prayer by all of us my mother then prayed aloud asking God to help me to do all that I could in the great fight for the right and if it be His will to bring me back safe and well. We stayed in the room a few minutes longer and we all

seemed to feel so happy and when I left the room smiles had dried all tears.

But I was to see them all once more (with the exception of my brother) because they left for home the next morning and that afternoon our troop train passed through Athens, Georgia, my home town. The train waited there about ten minutes. Oh, what a flood of smiles and sunshine greeted us! Girls threw their arms around my neck and kissed me, girls kissed me before their mothers and their mothers kissed me, too, then the last good-bye from my mother and sisters and the train started.

But where was my father? All the time he was standing on the outskirts of the crowd looking at me and when the train started he came up to say his last words. He took my hand and as the train gained speed he ran along with the train as long as he could and just before he kissed me and loosed my hand he said, "Good-bye and good luck. God bless you."

My, I shall never forget that last picture, my father running along with the train as far as he could until the speed caused him to drop out.

What do you suppose I was thinking of the next few minutes? It was late in the afternoon, the time when we turn homeward, and my thoughts were of my father, mother and sisters.

I was wondering what their thoughts were as they

stood there at the station and watched the train as it grew smaller and smaller in the distance, and then as it rounded the curve and out of sight I knew they started home and that their thoughts were of me and of my leaving them perhaps for a l-o-n-g, l-o-n-g time—perhaps forever—and I wondered and thought about them. A year later at this same depot I fell into my mother's arms and I thought then, "I don't have to die to go to Heaven."

WOULD YOU?

A week or ten days then at Camp Upton.

Most of the men of the 82nd Division were from the northern states. When we arrived at Camp many of our men were in twelve hours ride of their homes; many of them lived in New York City.

The 82nd Division was located at Camp Upton, awaiting orders to entrain for embarkation to go overseas where men were in urgent need, and while there many soldiers left the division without permission in order to go to their homes and tell the home folks good-bye, and in the meantime the division sailed leaving several hundred A. W. O. L's. (That means absent without official leave.)

DESERTION IN THE FACE OF THE ENEMY? You may think so but wait; read further before you form any opinion. For six months some of these men

had not seen their families. The men who lived in the southern states spent many week-ends at their homes and their families would come to the camp to see them. All Atlanta opened wide her homes to all the soldier boys in her midst. True southern hospitality never shone more brightly. But this was not like being in their own homes and seeing their own loved ones. The wives and parents of some of the boys from the northern states came South to see them but there were many whose parents were unable to make the trip. This is the picture behind the screen. Boys away from their homes six months, then brought back within a few hours ride of them and about to leave for overseas.

Here's what these boys probably said to themselves: "Wait a little while, I'll go away and fight with all my might, but I want to go to my home once more; I want to look into my mother's eyes once more and feel those loving arms around me; I want to talk with my dad once more; these many years he has been my adviser, training me for the battle of life, now I want to have another long talk with him before I go into the real battle of life." Some wanted to see that "best girl" again and another perhaps wanted to see his young wife before leaving and in some instances maybe the soldier boy wanted to press his child once more to his heart and per-

haps his child whom he had never seen, so when he crossed the big body of water and went into the fray he would have a vision of his baby with the other loved ones at home when pictures that he loved so dearly came before his eyes. Would you have gone? The hero in the novel might not, but I am not writing a novel, I am writing real facts; I am writing about real boys, what they did in real life. Maybe the aching hearts that were yearning for a last good-bye would have pulled you, too, towards your home once more and then after waving good-bye you would have felt better and would have fought harder. Well, anyway, it didn't hinder the World War, for the A. W. O. L's, every one of them I think, reported back to Camp Upton and caught the next transport across the Atlantic and joined us upon their arrival overseas. Yes, they were punished a little by being given some extra duties to perform.

MOTHERS NEVER FORGET

I like to give concrete cases and you will find a number of them throughout this book. Mrs. F. T. Oppice, a mother of one of the boys in my company, came to Camp Upton from Marshalltown, Iowa, to see her son before he left. Mrs. Oppice wanted her son, Roland, to go into New York City with her.

The camp was crowded. The hostess house was crowded most of the time and she wanted to be with her son alone sometimes; then, too, knowing that he was leaving she, like all our mothers, wanted to do everything for her son's pleasure. But Roland's pass had been turned down. Only a certain percentage of passes could be issued to a company and the percentage allowed our company had been issued.

Roland introduced his mother to me and after seeing how she wanted her son to go into the city with her I got busy. In fifteen minutes I had Roland's pass properly issued and signed from headquarters and he and his mother went away rejoicing.

But that wasn't all. Some people sometimes forget the kindness that others show them, but never did a mother forget any little kindness shown her soldier boy. Mrs. Oppice secured my home address from her son. About two months after I arrived overseas a letter from my mother said that she had received a long nice letter from Mrs. Oppice telling how much she appreciated what I did for her and her boy at Camp Upton.

Roland and I were in the same company. A correspondence between our mothers continued while we were in France. Many letters went to Georgia from the Iowa mother saying, "Have you any news from our boys lately? Have you heard anything

from the 82nd Division since the drive started?'' And similar letters from the Georgia mother went to Iowa and sometimes their letters passed each other in the mail on their journeys.

On the night of April the 26th, my last night in New York, while in the lobby of the McAlpin Hotel, I was very pleasantly surprised to meet my cousin, Mr. E. D. Anthony of West Palm Beach, Florida. He spared neither time nor money in contributing to my pleasure, and my last night in New York before leaving for France is very happily remembered.

As we were marching away to board the train for embarkation I saw Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Joel, of Atlanta, Ga., waving a last good-bye to their only boy, Lieutenant Y. Lyons Joel, one of the lieutenants in my company. It was really a last good-bye, because their brave boy never recovered from a wound received in the Argonne.

THE TRIP OVER

At 2:00 A.M. on May 1st, our troop train reached the harbor at Boston and we quietly detrained and went aboard the Scandinavian, a British ship. As I walked from the train to the ship, I was thinking of the folks at home and of the long journey ahead of

me, wondering how long I would be gone—wondering if I would ever come back. A drizzling rain as we embarked helped to make our feelings gloomy and everything look dismal.

From the Boston harbor, we sailed down to the New York harbor where we lay at anchor awaiting orders. On the morning of May the 3rd, we started across the Atlantic with sixteen ships in our convoy. The sixteen ships like one big family stayed together all the way across, not one getting out of sight of the others. Some days the sea was as calm as the Potomac and other days the big waves splashed over the deck. We had the battleship San Diego with us most of the way. When we reached the zone most frequented by the submarines the San Diego left us for the States because it was not built to fight submarines. It was destroyed two months later.

There were orders against throwing anything overboard. A cigar or cigarette stump floating here and there on the waves would be strong evidence to the submarines that a transport was nearby. Some nights the fog would be so dense that the sixteen ships would have to blow their whistles every few minutes to avoid a collision. It seems as if I can hear the fog horns now as I heard them during those anxious nights in May, 1918. What a mournful noise to go to sleep by—a noise like that of frogs chiming

(U. S. Official)

in a lonely far away swamp. And before we closed our eyes in sleep we did not know but that we would awake on the dark cold ocean waves. Several torpedoes sent through our convoy would have reaped a great horror. Some Red Cross nurses would have gone down with us. Can there be anything more horrible than WAR?

Already a friend of mine, Allen R. Fleming, Jr., from my home town, had gone down just a few weeks before to a watery grave, but I did not know of it then. He was killed by the explosion of a depth charge when the United States ship "Manley" collided with a British naval vessel, March 19, 1918.

We had regular drilling hours on the boat, though the drilling was confined mostly to setting up exercises and lectures. Each company had different drilling hours as all could not get on decks at one time. About the third day out, after I had dismissed my platoon I stood about fifteen minutes watching the tossing waves as they splashed against the sides of the boat. I then started to my state room. On my way I passed a captain lecturing to his men. The clear-toned voice, the manly delivery and the eloquent words arrested my attention. He was not explaining the various parts of the rifle nor drill movements nor tactic formations. No, these things had been explained time and again and these move-

ments had been executed over and over. His talk was a heart to heart talk to his men, a talk that held them spellbound; the kind of a talk that American soldiers appreciated. I listened until he finished and went away feeling as if I had profited by it. Whenever I saw this captain after this I thought about the magnificent speech I heard him make to his men.

Now I want to take you a month or more ahead of my story so as to finish this little episode. The first of July we were occupying the front line trenches in the Toul Sector. This captain led a patrol one night. He was an able and conscientious officer, but for some reason he took several swallows of brandy before going out on the patrol. It made him intoxicated. While on the patrol in No Man's Land, near the German front line trenches he made a lot of noise by loud talking which imperiled the safety of his men. His men were brave boys but they did not care to be surrounded by German machine guns. Finally his men got him back in our lines. Two officers were sent to investigate and reported that the captain was too drunk to put on a gas mask. He was in a stupor in his dugout. The next morning he was put under arrest and the necessary charges were preferred against him. The court sentenced him to dishonorable discharge and ten years at Leavenworth but unanimously recommended

leniency. The Commander-in-Chief revised the sentence to reduction to the ranks. I understand that he made a touching talk before the court, asking that they place him back in his own company as a private, saying, "In No Man's Land I have disgraced myself, in No Man's Land will I defend myself." They placed him in our regiment but not in his old company thinking that would be too much of an embarrassment for him. Did he redeem himself, you are no doubt asking? He led patrols way into the enemy lines, while in the Toul sector, he rendered valuable work in the St. Mihiel drive and his service in the Argonne was brilliant. He would go out by himself and bring back German officers' helmets and pistols and other evidences of his bravery but one day he went too far, one day the steel of the enemy took his life and he was laid to rest besides the many others of our regiment in the graveyard at Chatel Chehery.

Lots of interesting things happened before we landed. When we got into the danger zone we slept in our clothes with our life belts tied around us. Occasionally we would get a wireless that a submarine had been sighted at a certain point and if it was near by our ships would start a zig-zag course.

We were all anxious to know where we would land, but the Captain of the ship did not know himself

until the submarine chasers met us off the Irish coast and gave the Captain his landing orders. The destroyers knew where the submarines had been recently sighted, so they knew where it would be safer for us to land. We landed in Liverpool, May 16th. We weren't through dodging submarines though, as we had to cross the Channel.

OUR STAY IN ENGLAND

We were very fortunate to have landed at Liverpool, for this enabled us to travel through England. It was twilight when we marched off the boat. Soon we were on our way to a rest camp on the outskirts of the city.

We marched through the residential section. On our occasional halts for rest, people would stop and talk to us. An old man shook my hand and told me how glad he was to see us. He meant every word of it. The German drive which started on March 21st, and the succeeding drives of the common enemy had cast a gloomy cloud over England and the sight of healthy, husky Americans streaming through their country to the western front was a glorious spectacle to our British friends. It made them forget the years gone by when we whipped them for our independence.

We were at the rest camp only a couple of days when the order came for us to entrain for Southampton. When we marched down to the depot and saw the train that we were to board we could not help but comment on the engine and coaches, which were small in comparison with those on our great railway systems. The small engine and coaches reminded me of little toy trains. We saw many other things that demonstrated how we had surpassed in many respects our mother country.

So we started our day's ride from one port town to another—Liverpool to Southampton. "Beautiful" and "picturesque" fall far short of describing the scenery that we saw as we journeyed through England. The beautiful little castles nestling among the green hillsides and the herds of sheep grazing in the valleys made pictures of ideal beauty, pictures that linger now in my memory when I think of England.

While enjoying this ride across England I was not aware of the fact that a fellow townsman and classmate of mine was buried somewhere in the beautiful country I was admiring. Lieutenant Robert J. Griffith was killed just a few weeks before this, May 9th, in an airplane accident. And from that time on I have heard of many of my friends who gave their lives in the World War, and even at this late date

occasionally I hear for the first time of some one I knew who died in the service.

About noon our train stopped in a little city for twenty minutes and we were served hot tea and sandwiches. As I had expected, the tea was sugarless, but I was prepared for it. Just before I left Camp Gordon, Professor and Mrs. S. V. Sanford of Athens, Ga., received a letter from their son, Lieutenant Shelton Sanford, (who was among the first to go overseas) saying that it would not be a bad idea if the boys just leaving for France would bring a little sugar with them. Mrs. Sanford mentioned it to my mother who told me about it in one of our conversations over long distance telephone while I was at Camp Upton. Lieutenant Joel and I bought five pounds of lump sugar in New York and it came in very handy.

Upon our arrival at Southampton we marched to another rest camp. The second day there each man was given an autographed letter from the King. I sent mine home.

Here's a copy of the letter:

"WINDSOR CASTLE.

Soldiers of the United States, the people of the British Isles welcome you on your way to take your stand beside the armies of many Nations now fighting

in the Old World the great battle for human freedom.

The armies will gain new heart and spirit in your company. I wish I could shake the hand of each one of you and bid you God speed on your mission.

GEORGE R. I.

April, 1918."

King George is all right, but he certainly liked to have his picture taken. I saw his picture in papers and magazines while overseas oftener than I saw the picture of any of the other prominent men. Most of the pictures I saw of the King showed him decorating a hero for gallantry in action or devotion "above and beyond the call of duty" and I liked to see such pictures.

The King was a busy man, frequently reviewing his many troops from different parts of the world. On his dominions the sun never sets and over 400,000,000 people recognize the sovereignty of his crown. I do not blame him for feeling proud of his great Empire. And thanks to the old King's navy! It saved thousands of us from a watery grave.

While in Southampton I wrote the following letter:

"Somewhere in England, May 19, 1918.

Dear home folks:

Yesterday several of us tried to hire a car for an hour for the purpose of seeing the city. The taxi driver laughed at us and stated that there had not been any sightseeing or joy riding in England in

over two years. He said that he could carry us to catch a train or visit the sick or to meet some important business engagement. None of these things fitted our case, so we saw the city on foot.

Today is a beautiful day. One of those quiet Sundays. Sometimes I forget I am so far away from home.

It's at the close of day, at sunset, when everything is calm, still and lonely, that I think of home most.

I feel confident that I am going back some day, but if I should not please do not grieve for me, but feel good and proud that you, too, have contributed to a great and worthy cause.

With a heart full of love,

FRANK."

As I was writing the above letter the boats were waiting nearby in the harbor to carry us across to France and the next night we were again in troubled waters—the English Channel—a regular ship graveyard. So the popular report that circulated at Camp Gordon before we left that we would train for three months in England was, as many of the rumors that soldiers frequently hear, not true. We did train somewhat in France before we went into the trenches and drives, but it was just in rear of the battle fronts.

FRANCE AND BACK OF THE BRITISH LINES

We were in England barely a week. On the afternoon of May 20th, we changed our English money into French money and that night we loaded on small boats and crossed the rough English Channel, arriving at Le Havre, France, very early the next morning.

I cannot describe the peculiar thrill I had when I stepped upon French soil. The first thing my eyes fell upon was a hospital train of wounded British soldiers waiting there in the port to be sent back to England. It was England that had suffered most in the recent German drives and thousands of British soldiers were then sleeping in Flanders field.

We marched through the streets of Le Havre as we marched through the streets of Liverpool a week before. I think every house and show window had French signs on them and as we marched through the heart of the city the only familiar sign I saw was the one which had on it the word "café."

The French people could not come up and tell us in our tongue as the English did how glad they were to see us, but they all waved as we marched by and the appreciative expressions of delight that beamed from their faces told us more than words could express.

Way back in 1777 LaFayette landed on the shores of America and offered all he had for American independence. War clouds were hanging thick and dark over us at that time but the landing of the "Apostle of Liberty" brought new cheer and spirit to our then disheartened and depressed soldiers, and now nearly a century and a half later if the spirit of the dead watches over the living he saw us bringing joy and hope to his people and joining France and her Allies in battling for her liberty and freedom and that of the world.

We marched to our rest camp on a hill near the city. Our stay here was short, too. Man power now meant the salvation of the Allies. Emergency is the best word to express the critical stage of the war at this time. The next move the German High Command would make was a puzzle to our leaders. It was not known then but that he would immediately begin another drive for the Channel ports or perhaps a direct drive on Paris. Consequently eight American divisions were rushed back of the British front.

OUR BEST FRIEND

The second day we were camped out on this hill we left just after dinner on a long hike. I remember how awfully hot was that day. It was seven

miles out to where we were going. When we got there we were introduced to what proved to be our best friend in France—a gas mask. After receiving the mask we gathered around a big Scotchman and he proceeded to tell us something about our best friend. In short he told us that the British gas mask that we were going to carry with us into action was a mask that would be an absolute protection against any and all the German gases, and that the deadly gases that we would draw through the chemicals would enter our lungs pure air. After the Scotchman's talk we had unshaken faith and confidence in our masks, and we never separated from our best friend while near the front.

Then we started our long, hot and dusty march back to the camp, getting back about supper time. That night we were allowed to go down into the city of Le Havre. One officer from each company had to stay in camp and there was some dispute as to whether it was Lieutenant Brown's or my time to stay with our company. We finally decided it with the flip of a coin and fortunately I lost. I felt bad as they were leaving but in a little while after they left one of the blackest clouds I have ever seen came up, and then I was glad I did not go.

I went into the officers' tent which had in it victrolas, pool tables, writing desks, and many other

things affording comfort and pleasure for us. In a little while it began to rain. Have you ever noticed how lonesome it makes you feel sometimes when you are far away from home and it begins to rain? I was unusually homesick that night, but after I started a letter to my mother I felt much better. Here's a paragraph from the letter I wrote that night:

"I want to see you mighty bad tonight and I feel as if I will some day. Somehow, I don't feel as if I'm so far away from you, and I'm glad I feel that way, but I miss you terribly. I made up my mind to write you exactly how I am getting along. I think you are entitled to know, and so far all my letters have expressed my exact feelings. Tonight, I'm a little homesick, naturally so, why shouldn't we be at times? And if I said that I never get homesick you would know better. I decided the best thing I could do would be to write to you and now I feel all right. I get so much pleasure and comfort in writing to you and Papa and the other members of the family. Now when you want to see me real bad, just sit down and write me, and that burning feeling in your heart for me will go away, as it does in me when I write to you while wanting to see you so bad."

On the afternoon of the 25th we marched down to the station at Le Havre and there boarded a long troop train, and that night we started, we knew not where, only we knew that we were still making our way nearer and nearer the fighting. We rode all

night in those dark coaches arriving about day at a small station named Eu. Here we detrained, ate breakfast and each battalion marched to small villages. We hiked about 12 kilometers to the little town of Tilloy-Flourville.

This town was not very far back of the Somme front. The village looked deserted, but there were quite a few old people living in the town. When the old lady showed me the room that was assigned to me, she pointed to a picture of a French soldier that hung over the mantle, and shook her head slowly and said, "La Guerre." She saw I understood. And after that in other little villages I saw other good old French women point to "pictures on the wall" and give a sigh which told me that somewhere on the long western battle front, the original of the picture had fought and died for France. Suppose that it was our soil that had been invaded, our homes that had been crushed and piled into wreckage, and the sons of France had come to our rescue as the boys in khaki rushed to France, then our mothers would have been pointing to pictures on the walls telling the boys from across the seas the sad tale that was told to us. We will never know or realize all that France suffered, but we love her with a love that cements us together so strongly that I hope down the ages we will go hand in hand forever.

Nearly every Sunday I would write a long letter home. All of them were saved. A part of the one I wrote from this little village Sunday morning, May 26th, is as follows:

"I think, long and dream of the days to come, when I get back home. How happy I'll be, and how I am really going to enjoy living—just living at home—that is all I wish. I am very comfortably situated, I have a room in a nice large home, a beautiful French home, and the sweetest old lady lives here in it all alone. This is a quiet, quaint old village, very beautiful—the old church sits across the street, older probably than any church in America. The people are going home from church now and I can hear them talking, but not a word do I understand. I have a front room with two large windows opening on the street. I offered the old lady here in the house some money for bringing me some water and she refused it, then I offered her a few lumps of sugar and she took them gladly and willingly.

Have had very few hardships, little inconveniences, that's all. I wouldn't feel right if everything went along smoothly; in fact I would be disappointed, because war as you know isn't a play thing. The harder time I have, the more I'll enjoy and appreciate life when I get home, so all I'm doing now is sacrificing present joys for future joys. The civilian, as a rule, pictures the hardships of war as just death and mutilation, but there are others, for instance, being deprived of many comforts and pleasures. But

so far our hardships have been little, and we are all in good spirits.

I censor the mail of my platoon. They all speak of how far England and France are behind the United States and they are right. Some of these old houses are hundreds of years old. Many of them have their barns built onto their homes and I can step out of the parlors and dining rooms into the barns. These are the homes of the little village people. But the fine chateaux of the rich are much prettier than our millionaires' homes."

M. LUCIEN JOUFFRETT

We started a course of intensive training here. Captain Tillman rearranged our company (Co. "H," 328 Inf.) and I was given the third platoon. I did not have much time with my platoon because as you will see later I had many other assignments, such as Town Major, Acting Battalion Adjutant, Battalion Gas Officer, Ammunition Officer, and Officer in Charge of Combat Train.

When the Americans began to arrive in France we needed someone to help us in our billeting in the French cities and towns. French interpreters were in great demand. While we were in Tilloy-Flourville, we were very fortunate to have M. Lucien Jouffrett assigned to our battalion as interpreter. We all became attached to him. He was over fifty

years of age but he never weakened in the many long marches he and I made together over the French roads. He was wounded and captured early in the war and escaped and gave his General some valuable information about the enemy for which he was cited. His peace time occupation was that of a Paris banker. Rarely a day passed that he did not speak of and write to his "dear" wife and baby.

Our General wanted us to get the experience of moving from one town to another. I received the following order the 31st of May:

"Headquarters, 2nd Battalion,
328 Infantry, May 31st, 1918.

Memorandum:

1. Lt. Holden, Co. H., M. Lucien A. Jouffrett, and one N. C. O. from each company will proceed at 1:00 P. M. today, May 31st, 1918 to Monsboubert by marching. Full equipment and rations for one day will be carried. Baggage will be left at these headquarters to be forwarded by transport. They will locate the billets occupied by the out-going battalion and be prepared to conduct troops to their billets on arrival.

Battalion Headquarters, Infirmary, Kitchens, Stables for horses, location of incinerators, and latrines will be located.

BY ORDER OF MAJOR BUXTON.
J. A. Woods,
1st. Lt., 2nd Bn., Adjutant."

(U. S. Official)

A few hours after we received this order the old interpreter, a non-commissioned officer from each company and I started on our hike to Monsboubert. There were a few inhabitants in each village through which we passed. Our progress was slowed somewhat when we passed through these villages as the inhabitants would always have something to say to our interpreter and he would stand and talk to them until I called him. After several stopped him I asked what they wanted. He said that they all asked him the same question and that was if he had any late news from the war. It was something new for the French people to see American soldiers and they thought they might learn something from our interpreter as he was with American troops.

Thoughts of the marching on these roads remind me of a little incident that happened the first night I arrived home. This is far ahead of my story but I will relate it now. I had talked some little time to the home folks and then my trunk was brought in and I opened it and began taking out souvenirs—shell vases, wooden shoes, statues, lace, and many other little things that I had bought. Then I came to a package wrapped up in a lot of paper.

"What is that?" my mother eagerly inquired.

I unwrapped it and held up a pair of old hob nailed shoes. They were hard and stiff and the hob

nails had worn completely off in some places and worn slick and half off in other places and both shoes had big holes in the soles. This brought the first tears from my mother. I guess she had a picture of me marching in far away France and she pressed the old rough shoes to her breast and just looked at me as the tears rolled down her cheeks. Yes, they represented many miles on the hard graveled roads of France, and they were the same shoes that covered my cold and wet feet through many miles of marching over there. I saved them to bring home with me when I received a new pair. But let's go back to France.

When we arrived in Monsboubert, much to my pleasant surprise I found that Bob Gunn's battalion was in the town. We had not seen each other since we left the States. He and I were lifelong friends, so just imagine two old pals meeting as we did. Bob's battalion was leaving the next day to make room for our battalion. We were certainly glad to see each other. We had supper together in a little French cafe and I can see Bob now enjoying those wonderfully cooked French fried potatoes. Jouffrett, the interpreter, ate with us, and by the way he smacked I know he enjoyed the sardines.

That night Bob and I stayed together and it was way in the wee hours of morning before we went to

sleep. I had walked many miles that day so slept soundly when I did get to sleep. About three o'clock in the morning Bob awoke me and asked, "Hear those airplanes dropping bombs on Abbeville?" That was the first war noise I had ever heard. Nearly every night after that I could hear the bombing planes dropping bombs in and around Abbeville.

The next day our battalion arrived. Late that afternoon we had an officers' meeting at battalion headquarters. After this meeting was over, the mail corporal distributed our first mail from home. I cannot recall when I was so happy as I was when I received several letters addressed to me in familiar handwriting. There was a beautiful garden just in rear of battalion headquarters, and most of the flowers were in full bloom. It was then late in the afternoon, the time of day, as I have said, when I thought of home most. I went into the garden and sat on a bench and began reading my letters. Every line was filled with bright, cheery words and thoughts, just like all the other letters that I received while in France. As I sat there and read those letters, I was happy that I was doing something in the great crisis, yet I felt a little lonely and longed for home.

Among these letters was an invitaton to an exercise to which I had long looked forward with much

interest. Here is the letter I wrote to my sister in answer to the invitation:

"Somewhere in France, June 6, 1918.
Dearest Mary:

I received my first mail today and the first letter I opened was the invitation to the commencement exercises at Lucy Cobb Institute, and sister, I just can't describe the feeling that came over me, because I have often thought of and pictured you at the graduating exercises and I wanted to be present. I would like to send you a present; but can't, so I'll send you all the love a brother could have for a sister, and all the best wishes he could wish.

I cut the family group picture into small pieces and now I have you all underneath a sheet of isinglass in my pocketbook which I bought the other day, and when I open it, I can see the dearest faces on earth to me.

I don't know but I just imagine America has been aroused since I left and is now putting her whole strength and heart into the war. I hope so, she ought to, she must! I've been in and passed through a number of towns and cities both in England and France, and I haven't seen one single boy or man, that I could stare at and say to him if I came over to fight why aren't you at the front?"

OUR FIRST FATAL CASUALTY

Several days later I rode a bicycle about 12 kilometers over to where Bob Gunn's battalion was located. I wanted to see him again because I had just

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heard the sad news of his captain being killed while on an inspection tour on the British front. This was Captain Jewett Williams, son-in-law of the beloved Chancellor Barrow of the University of Georgia. He was killed on the night of June 9th, 1918. This was the first fatal casualty of the 82nd Division. Captain Wililams left the ministry to follow his flag. I never saw Lieutenant Gunn after this until we met over in the States.

It was dark when I returned to Monsboubert and I was tired but I could not go to sleep for some time as I was thinking of Captain Williams. I had the room that he occupied a few days before when his battalion was in Monsboubert and I was sleeping on the same bed on which only a few nights before he had slept.

TRAINING

The drilling ground was about two kilometers from the town. Nearly every day we would go out, carrying our rolling kitchens with us and eating dinner on the drill field and would not return until late in the afternoon. We did not drill for hours the old "squads rights" and "squads left" but mixed in games with our training. This made our drilling more interesting and the days did not drag by as did the old drilling days back at Camp Gordon.

A platoon of British soldiers was sent through our division giving exhibition drills. One day while we were spending the day on our drill field we assembled and witnessed an exhibition of drilling and games of these picked British soldiers. The flash and pep they put into their drilling and games were refreshing.

Thereafter we began to mix in games with our drill schedules. The gas mask would not have been worth the trouble of forever carrying it if we could not put it on in six seconds and the many games we played with the gas masks trained us to put them on quickly. One could easily inhale enough gas to prove fatal if he was not able to put his mask on in a hurry. You may think it an easy thing to put on a gas mask in six seconds; it usually takes the beginner several minutes.

Just suppose you were at the front. Everything is still and quiet. Gas shells begin to burst around you. What would be the first thing to do? Hold your breath, of course. How long can you hold your breath? Take out your watch and try it. Now do not take a deep breath before you begin counting the seconds, because you could not do that when the gas shells began bursting. Well, suppose you could hold your breath only forty-five seconds and suppose it would take you sixty seconds to put on your mask.

What would be the result? Death! if the gas being used against you was a deadly gas.

Just on the edge of our drill field we saw the first airplane bomb holes. There were three large holes made in the ground. They were about fifty yards apart and in a straight line. Later, of course, these holes became common sights, but this was our first look at any of the war signs of destruction. We were puzzled quite a bit about these holes. We would not have been if they had been in the little village. We knew that often the airman missed his mark, but these holes were not even close to a village as they were several kilometers from Monsboubert, the nearest town.

I recall one very hot day before we left this area when we were spending the entire day on the drill field. I marched my platoon over to the edge of the drill field and had them to stack arms and told them to "fall out" for ten minutes' rest. We stretched out underneath the shade of a nearby tree, and as usual relaxed and half way dozed as you probably have done when stretched out on the ground in the shade on a hot day.

"I have it!" exclaimed one of the members of my platoon. This broke the silence of our resting period.

"You have what?" said his chum.

"I have solved the mystery of the three airplane bomb holes."

"Be quiet and let somebody rest sometimes," said another.

"Go on and tell it," chimed in several.

I looked at my watch and it was time to "fall in" but I wanted to hear how he solved the mystery of the three holes so I waited until he finished.

"Well," he said, "I figure it is just like this. A German started over to drop a few bombs on London. When he got this far he met one of those daring British boys who don't take off their hats to anyone in the air. When he saw this British plane he started back home but he was afraid the British plane would catch him so he pulled his lever dropping the three bombs to lighten his load so he could fly faster."

This theory soon spread through the battalion and it was accepted as being the real reason why the bomb holes were so far from town. There's nothing that the American soldier cannot figure out.

Many planes flew high over us and at first we gazed at them but later we learned not to look up when they were directly overhead because often German planes would come over and photograph our area. The sun shining into a lot of upturned faces showed up well in aero photographs.

Here we had our first casualty. While on this drill

field a piece of shrapnel from an anti-aircraft gun hit one of Company F's men on the foot.

A LITTLE MUSIC

In the professor's home next to the village school, Captain Tillman had a room in which there was a piano. Lieutenant Johnny Brown, from Sylacauga, Alabama, was an old star on the University of Alabama glee club and he could play the rags that made us forget about the war. Nearly every night we had a singing feast in Captain Tillman's room. I remember particularly one night the professor's family opened their room door across the hall to hear the singing and when Lieutenant Brown started playing the "Marseillaise," I wish you could have seen the professor's family. They went wild with excitement and joy.

One of the most pleasant recollections I have of my stay here is the strawberries in the garden where I was billeted. The lady of the house told me to help myself and I did. About three doors from me an old lady kept several cows. Nearly every day I enjoyed big, red, juicy strawberries with thick cream.

As I said before, we moved from town to town. Our General wanted us to get used to moving around and we got plenty of it. We were billeted in many villages.

I hold in my memory the picture of every little town we were in, and there are numerous little things that I recall that happened in every one of them in which we were billeted that I could write about as I have written about Monsboubert. I will say, however, that in every town we found these good old French women and it would take a large book to tell of their kindness and politeness to us.

A PLEASANT MOVE

After our short stay back of the British front in northern France, our division was ordered to the Toul sector, and on June 16, 1918, our regiment entrained. Just a month before this we had crossed from Liverpool to Southampton and from the train we saw picturesque old England and now we journeyed for two days through many miles of beautiful France.

We were all happy because we were going into the American zone and that meant we would no longer be on British rations. They fed us too much jam. Some of the American divisions that were sent back of the British front remained and fought with the British throughout the war.

THE DOUGHBOY

This was our first experience in riding in little French box cars. Every car had marked on the sides, "40 Hommes, 8 Chevaux," which meant in real language, "forty men or eight horses." I hope the eight horses were not as crowded as the forty men that squeezed in the little cars.

Think of forty men when night came unrolling their heavy packs to get out their blankets. Imagine the confusion and mix up as tooth brushes, soap, knives, spoons and forks scattered through the straw in the box car as forty packs were unrolled. Oh! the life of a doughboy. I know. I was a Second Lieutenant from the First Officers' Training Camp until I received my discharge. I lived close to the private. You have often pictured him lying bleeding in a shell hole crying for water or hanging stiff on barbed wire entanglements in the gray hours of early dawn. But there are many pictures of a doughboy's life that have never been told.

Lieutenant Kirby and I tried to sleep on the floor in our small compartment car while Captain Tillman and Lieutenant Brown's feet dangled in our faces as they tried to sleep on the little seat above us.

FRENCH COFFEE

Sometime during your life you have probably had a friend try to do you a favor when at the time you wished he had not attempted it. That was our experience that night. About one o'clock the train stopped in a little city. Those of us who were not asleep had at least gotten quiet. The rolling and bumping of the train had made us a wedge-like mass. All at once I heard French voices open up outside like a barrage starting a drive. I never heard such jabbering in all my life. I did not know whether the war was over or whether the Germans had broken through and they wanted us to get out and fight.

I thought of old Jouffrett, our faithful interpreter. I immediately went to the car next to ours and asked him what was the matter. He poked his head out of the window and in a nonchalant manner said: "Mr. Holden, zey say zey heard ze troop train was coming through and zey have prepared hot coffee for all."

Then the officer in charge of the train passed by and told me to wake up the men and tell them they could get hot coffee if they wanted any; that the train would stop there for twenty minutes.

On the platform were large containers of hot and bitter coffee. I told the men about it but very few availed themselves of the opportunity. The French-

men kept insisting that we drink the coffee after they had gone to the trouble to prepare it. But our boys did not want to get out of their places at that time of the night. They knew it would have been like unpacking and repacking a box of sardines. Then too, they had tasted French coffee before. Ham and eggs might have gotten them up, but not French coffee.

When the train started the Frenchmen were puzzled and they jabbered something—I don't know what. But we puzzled them more times than once while we were over there. Speaking a different language and being of different natures, I think we got along fine with our French comrades.

OUR NEW AREA

About daybreak the next morning (June 18) our battalion arrived at Foug. We had slept very little so it was a relief to get out in the fresh air and walk around. We marched into a nearby field and there our mess sergeant prepared breakfast.

Major Buxton sent for me as he never failed to do when we reached a "new town," unless he knew that Lieutenant Woods (the Battalion Adjutant) would see me. Major Buxton saw me this time and he pulled out his map from his small leather case and

showed me the little town of Lucey. He told me that our battalion was to occupy this village. A sergeant from each of the four companies reported to me and we hurried through breakfast and were off for Lucey.

There were always plenty of maps at our disposal while in France and I had a very good map of our new surroundings. I knew the battalion would begin marching as soon as they completed their usual "policing up the grounds" where they ate breakfast. Major Buxton showed me the road over which the battalion would march. It was about eight miles. I saw a much shorter road to Lucey but Major Buxton said it was too hilly for the battalion to take the short cut with their heavy packs. We put our packs on the kitchen wagon and started over the short cut hilly road. We arrived at Lucey about an hour and a half before the battalion and had everything in readiness upon their arrival.

Lucey was a little town and like most of the French villages was built in a valley. Steep hills on all sides of the village were covered with the principal French product, grapes. There were a few natives still living in the village and they kept the vineyards well worked.

During our week's stay at Lucey, we were put through stiff training. Toul was about twelve miles away and occasionally we would visit this walled in

city, where we would often meet with our friends from the other outfits of the division which were stationed nearby.

TO THE FRONT

On the afternoon of June 25, I was ordered to proceed to Boucanville where our battalion headquarters would be located on the front line. I was to go ahead of the battalion and get familiar with the ammunition dumps, pyrotechnics, and various other locations. There are, as you doubtless know, three battalions to a regiment. Our battalion (2nd) was to occupy the front line. The first battalion was to be in support in the woods a few miles in the rear. The third battalion was to be stationed in reserve in a little village, about five miles back of the front named Cornieville.

Just before I left I wrote the following hurried note:

"France, June 25, 1918.

Dear Papa:

Am in terribly big hurry. Am in good spirits and good health. With all my love to you, Mama, Howard and the girls and all the others I love so dearly and God grant that I'll do what I can and return to you all.

FRANK A. HOLDEN."

This little hurriedly written note means little if anything to the general reader, but it shows that we always wrote home if possible, just before going into any dangerous places, and this was my last opportunity to write home before going to the front for my first time, so you see if I had joined the long roll of the boys who did not come back, then this little note would have been a precious little note to the folks at home.

I left with Lieutenant Little of Forsyth, Ga., about three o'clock that afternoon in a truck for Cornieville. We lit a fat cigar as we left Lucey and enjoyed our ride very much.

We reached Cornieville a little before dark. The Supply Company of the 103rd Infantry (26th Division) was stationed there and every night they carried rations to the front line and support battalions. They never left until after dark as most of the road was under observation. About 8:30, I got on one of the ration wagons and started to the front. The horse walked all the way and I learned quite a bit about our sector from the driver as we journeyed along.

The night was a cool clear moonlit night. As we got nearer the front, I could see flares shooting up over in the German lines.

"What is that?" I asked as three white stars

pierced upward through the darkness a few miles ahead of us.

The driver replied: "Some say it is a guide to German bombing planes and others say they keep very few men in their front lines in this sector and that it is to make the Americans think they have more men in their front line than they really have and others say they use the flares to keep us guessing what it does mean."

We reached Boucanville about midnight. The driver told me that the ration wagons did not go any further than Boucanville because a wagon was going into Xivray one night and the Germans slipped through our lines and captured the driver.

When we arrived at Boucanville I reported to the Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, 103rd Infantry. An orderly found me a place to sleep in the infirmary. The next morning I walked through the town which was well camouflaged and I found out all I could about the various locations and about dark I went to meet our battalion which was in the woods a few miles back. After telling Lieutenant Woods and Major Butxon all I had learned about our sector I then joined my platoon.

The members of my platoon always felt free to come to me with anything that concerned the welfare of the platoon. Just a little while before we started

our march into the trenches several of my men asked me not to carry one member of our platoon into the trenches with us. They said that nearly every man in the platoon would feel better if he were left behind. He was an Austrian and his grandfather was a prominent man at one time in the Austrian government. I saw Major Buxton and told him that although this boy was one of the best soldiers in my platoon, my men would feel better if he did not go into the trenches with us. We discussed the matter some little time and finally Major Buxton decided it would be best to transfer him to the supply company.

I went back to the little shacks in the woods and called the boy to one side and told him he had been transferred to the supply company. He answered that he was loyal in every way and wanted to do his best, but said that as he would be transferred he would tell me something that he had not previously mentioned which was if he should ever be captured the Germans would learn of his Austrian parentage and would kill him. He reported to the supply company that night back in Cornieville and stayed with it through the fighting, making one of the best soldiers in the company. He was put in charge of counting and checking and issuing clothing and for his efficient work was promoted to sergeant.

Now this boy made a good soldier. Immigration

is all right if properly limited, but if indiscriminate immigration is not stopped this country in fifty years from now may have great difficulty in fighting any country on account of the propaganda and influence of the foreign element here in sympathy with the enemy. Propaganda is a new science or rather an old science more extensively used during the World War by Germany in this country.

Four guides were sent back to us for our company from the company we were to relieve, one for each platoon to show us the way through the trenches. I remember the name of the guide for my platoon, Ray C. Miller of Waterloo, Iowa. Our orders were to march in single file, about three paces between each man as the roads were likely to be shelled that night. A big shell hitting into a platoon marching in close formation would be like shooting into a covey of partridges hovering close together on the ground.

Miller and I walked together at the head of the column. Occasionally we would pass a platoon on the road which had just been relieved. We were then far enough back of the front line trenches for the men to sing and not be heard by the Germans. They were happy to be relieved. Eighty-six days at the front, even though considered a "quiet sector" had been a terrible strain on them. Most, if not all, thought they were going to get their much needed

rest and so they were singing the good old familiar songs, "Where do we go from here boys?" and "There's a long, long trail a-winding," etc. The Germans at this time were concentrating their forces and were preparing to make a most desperate effort to break through our lines at Chateau Thierry. "On to Paris!" was their cry and the "long, long trail" was winding towards the wheat fields near Chateau Thierry for the 26th Division boys, and the rest that some thought they were going to get was a real rest —a long rest where there are no wars and suffering. I so often think of that night when the singing columns swung by us as we silently marched on to the trenches.

Miller led us through and beyond Boucanville a few hundred yards and then into a trench that began by the side of the road. We had read of trenches and we had dug trenches back in the States, but now we were in real trenches for the first time. We were marching in single file and followed just behind the guide. Occasionally a guard holding his gun in front of him would say, "Halt! who is there?" The quickness with which my guide would halt was very noticeable, but the next few days I understood. Our guards were nervous and high pitched when they first went into the trenches and there were several fatal accidents caused from guards shooting our own

men because the password was not forthcoming immediately after challenging. Then too, the passwords were French words which were difficult for us to pronounce. Miller would give the password and we would move on. Three platoons from our company stopped in Xivray.

A few days before this there was fierce fighting in this village. Six hundred Germans came over to take the little town but a company from the 103rd Infantry said, "No." More than sixty Germans were killed and the number of enemy dead near and back of the German trenches was never ascertained. When you get a chance read an account of this scrap or ask some member of the 26th Division about it. Two names—Xivray and Seichprey will live forever in the memory of the boys of the Yankee Division.

My platoon marched through Xivray past the few ghost-like walls that were still standing, and into the trenches to the right of the village. We relieved the 2nd Platoon, Co. A, 103rd Infantry. The Lieutenant in charge of the platoon that we were to relieve was at the beginning of the trench sector his platoon occupied. The Lieutenant and I walked through the trenches until we came to his last post.

"What is beyond this post?" I asked.

"A French company occupies the trenches beyond

but it is fifty yards or more to the nearest Frenchman."

"What's to keep the Germans from slipping in between our last post and the French and cutting us off from each other?" I said.

"Nothing to keep them from doing that," he said. "If I were you I would go over tomorrow and see the French Captain who has his dugout about a hundred yards down the trench and devise some plan whereby your men and his will meet," he added.

The Lieutenant was in a hurry to get away with his platoon before any shelling started on the roads.

When he left me he said: "Keep your men out of sight in day time. The Germans do not know that these trenches are here, but if the German observers should get a glimpse of one of your men they would then shell you."

My headquarters were in the middle of the trench sector we were holding. It was a hole dug out in the back of the trench about ten feet square. In one corner was a little box on which were a few pieces of writing paper and a candle. Two blankets hung over the doorway a few feet apart so when going in and out one blanket would be raised at a time so as not to let any light shine out. I kept two runners at my post with me all the time. There were little holes dug in the side of the trench where the men would

cuddle up and sleep in the day time, and where a few would sleep at night who did guard duty during the day.

About 2:00 o'clock I heard a rifle go off in my trench. I immediately ran up the trench and found the boy who shot looking over the top of the trench. I asked him what he shot at and he said he thought he saw something in the barbed wire in front, but said it might have been his imagination. I think it was.

We slept most of the time the next day. In the afternoon a few shells whistled overhead but they were falling way back of our lines. Later in the afternoon the company's mess sergeant's kitchen kept by Sergeant John Paul Jones of Talbotton, Ga., was showing too much smoke over in Xivray and the Germans started shelling the town. I lay out in the sunshine just out of our trenches behind a lot of camouflage and watched the shelling. It lasted ten to fifteen minutes. I thought our company, except my platoon, had been wiped out until a runner came over to deliver a message. I asked if anybody was left in Xivray and he said that no one was scratched. It was remarkable sometimes how many shells could drop among us and no one get hurt.

I did not stay with my platoon all the time. Major Buxton had to have another officer and I left

my platoon with Sergeant Hillis, of Statesboro, Ga. I was permanent officer of the day of our front line sector. We had guards on in Boucanville all the time and no one ever passed through the town without giving the password. We received a new password every day.

A few nights after that Lieutenant Joe Wood sent for me about 1:00 o'clock in the morning. I think Major Buxton was out making his rounds in the front line trenches. Wood was very tired and he asked me to "hold the bag" awhile. He dozed off to sleep in a chair and I sat by the phone. It was one of those still nights.

The most lasting and impressive of all my experiences in this quiet sector was the intense stillness of some of the nights. There was something weird about the long, still nights that made us speak in whispers. So often I would hear our men say, "Everything is mighty quiet tonight; they must be preparing for something big." A runner said to me once: "Major Buxton said be on the lookout for something to happen tonight. He said that everything seems so quiet that it makes him expect something is going to happen." Almost every night we could hear shelling somewhere on the front but occasionally the whole night would pass without a sound.

MEMORIES OF FRONT LINE SECTOR

There are many things I remember about our stay on this front. Strange as it may seem to you, some of our men preferred to be in the very front line trenches in this quiet sector rather than in support and reserve positions because there were no working details taken from the trenches and there was nothing much to do except lie around, write letters home, sleep, eat and talk in the day time and "stand to" in the early hours of the morning.

Sometimes only a few men would be awake in the front line trenches out of each platoon but these men who staid awake kept an ever watchful eye over the parapets into No Man's Land. When their time was out they would wake up other men to keep watch. But just before daybreak every man was awake and at his post. This is called "stand to." It was ust at dawn that most of the trench raids were made by the enemy.

The men in the rear always had plenty to do. The battalion in reserve would do a little drilling, practice throwing hand grenades and there was no end of "policing up" the company streets and the other parts of the little towns which looked as if they had never had a sweeping. Reserve battalions were

usually billeted in villages several miles back of the front.

The battalion in support also had some policing to do, but their hardest work would usually be going to the front line after dark, digging new trenches, making new barbed wire entanglements, quitting just in time to get back to their billets before day. So you can see why the front line trenches in this particular sector were the preference of the men.

Nearly every day I would watch for hours and hours our anti-aircraft guns shoot at the enemy airplanes. I never saw a plane brought down by this method on this front but as the white balls of smoke would burst around the planes, they made beautiful and interesting sights.

In every village on the front that had been heavily shelled (except those completely demolished) the village church steeple still towered as high in the air as ever. The church in Boucanville had several hits registered on it by the artillery but the steeple remained untouched.

I have often wondered why so many of these church steeples were left standing in the front line towns. Some said it was because they were difficult to hit, but I do not think that is true. The Germans were very good at hitting most anything they wanted to and the steeples furnished a visible and immov-

able target. Some said it was because they used our steeples as a range and guide for their artillery. Others said they used the steeples on their side of the lines for observation posts as we did those on our side and if they knocked ours down we would retaliate and that a kind of gentlemen's agreement about the matter existed.

One afternoon I climbed the winding steps of the steeple to the church in Boucanville. There were two signal corps men in the tip-top and they were looking out over the enemy territory and making notes of any movements of troops and signs of smoke and any other signs of the enemy they could detect.

I looked through field glasses over miles and miles of the enemy trench systems and into many little villages. Their camouflage was almost perfect. I wondered as I looked how many Germans were concealed in the area that I saw. I did not see a movement of any kind. It had the appearance of a place absolutely deserted.

The Germans across from us seemed to know as much about our locations as we did ourselves. I often think of how we used to sit in battalion headquarters and talk about how we believed the Germans could probably almost any time drop a 210 (that was the number of their largest shell) on us and bury us so deep in the ruins that it would take

days to dig us out. It is a fact that during their shelling the morning they made their attack on the men of the 103rd Infantry in Xivray three big 210's fell in a direct line, two of which fell just back of and one in front of battalion headquarters. This was a good indication that they knew where battalion headquarters were located and missed their calculations just a fraction. I saw the three big holes and they were large and deep enough to bury two large automobiles in each of them.

Now you are probably wondering why we did not move battalion headquarters. I'll tell you why. Simply because we thought if we did then the Germans would drop a 210 on us just to show us that they knew that we had moved.

Their spy system was remarkable. It seemed that they frequently knew the nights that our reliefs were to be made. I heard that before we relieved the 26th Division an old woman, pro-German, who lived in Raulecourt, where our regimental headquarters were located, would signal to the Germans the night we would make reliefs so they could shell the roads. Some of the men saw a light in her room on the second story of her home one night and her signaling days were over. They said she would light a candle in her room and pull down her curtain and give signals by walking between the candle and the curtain. "So shines a good deed in a naughty

world'' did not apply to the rays that came from this old lady's candle.

Here is something that we will never forget about our stay in this sector. We kept men stationed at various places along the front standing by a bell, klaxon or piece of iron rail ready to give the alarm should they detect any gas fumes. It was their duty to arouse us from our sleep by making all the noise they could when they would smell gas or hear other sentries give the alarm. We were often awakened by these gas alarms and my! what a feeling it was to be aroused from our sleep and hear this noise breaking the dead stillness of the night. They proved to be false alarms most of the time and an alarm became a regular joke, but when we heard one we never failed to put on our masks which we always had strapped around our necks or by our sides while we were sleeping. We knew the story of the wolves and the boy with his lambs and we slapped on our masks every time the alarms sounded.

Oftentimes we would hear the German gas alarms go off across from us. Some nights gas alarms would be sounding up and down the front for miles, one sentry taking it up from another and so on. I think that some of our sentries at times heard German gas alarms and thinking it was on our side of the lines, began turning their klaxons or beating their iron rails

with the strength of a blacksmith and then alarms on both sides the lines would be waking up everyone within hearing, all because a lone sentry somewhere thought he got a whiff of some deadly gas fumes when probably it may have been the fragrance from a little wild flower growing out in No Man's Land.

I must say something about Montsec. I heard the French lost many men trying to hold this high mountain during the early days of the war. We were almost at the foot of this giant upheaval. For many miles back of our front the Germans magnified our back area with their high powered Austrian glasses. When any movement or any new camouflage or any signs of new trenches having been dug were detected by the observers from the top of this mountain they would signal the locations to their artillery and from their maps they would begin shelling. This mountain was ever our day ghost until captured in the St. Mihiel drive.

IN RESERVE

After seven days in the front lines, we received our relief orders. I was ordered ahead of the battalion to Cornieville, a little town about six miles back of the lines. The battalion there was to move up to the support position and the support battalion was to

relieve us in the trenches. Of course reliefs had to be made at night.

We had a little railway system just back of the lines and after the battalion marched as far as Raulecourt, they boarded flat cars on the little narrow gauge railroad.

The battalion arrived about 3:00 A. M. at Cornieville for our first rest from the trenches. The mess sergeants who preceded the battalion with me had coffee prepared when our men arrived and a sergeant from each company and I had made all arrangements for places for them to sleep in lofts of barns called billets. Most of the next day was spent in sleeping, resting and cleaning up.

FROM TRENCHES TO PALACE CARS

While we were here in reserve there was a delivery of the largest batch of mail that we had received. The ration wagons brought us quite a bit while we were at the front, but the Regimental Post Office was located in Cornieville and we received our mail there as soon as it came in and could be sorted out.

While here, some of us were granted a day's pass to Toul and Nancy. Captain Howell Foreman of Atlanta, Ga., and I rode over to a nearby town and caught the Paris-Nancy express to Nancy. My! it

was great to sit in those seats with beautiful lace backs in a compartment of one of their fine palace cars and ride by perhaps the most exquisite scenery in all France. Most of the way the train followed the green valley alongside the winding Moselle river and on the hillsides could be seen the magnificent chateaux. What a change! Two days before this in the front line trenches—now twisting and turning past scenery that tourists pay dearly to see.

Nancy was a little Paris, a beautiful city, rather lively to be so near the front lines with show windows filled with souvenirs for the American soldiers. There were numerous fruit stands and wine parlors. The first thing I noticed when we arrived in the city was the entrance to the large cave near the station. Railroad stations were the main targets for airplane bombers and the best cave in the city was near the depot.

There were six large bath houses in Nancy and that afternoon I took a bath in a bath tub for the first time in, well, I will not say, and that night I slept between white sheets on a soft bed. Such a treat I had not expected so soon.

Captain Foreman and I had a room on the top floor of the American Hotel. About 2:00 o'clock in the morning we were awakened by the sirens. Enemy bombing planes were heard near the front making

their way towards Nancy and the news was phoned to the city, whereupon the sirens' whistles announced the approaching planes. We threw on a few clothes and rushed down five flights of stairs. The lobby was filled with people who had also dressed rather hurriedly. They had their valuables in little handbags and they waited to see if the planes were going to bomb Nancy; if so, they were going across the street into a cave. The planes must have been headed towards another city that night as shortly the safety signal was given and Nancy went back to slumberland.

The next day while eating dinner in a restaurant I saw Lieutenant Alvin Neely of Waynesboro, Ga., who was one of the instructors in my company at the First Officers' Training Camp. I was very glad to see him. He was in the 5th Machine Gun Battalion of the 2nd Division, and had just endured the severe fighting at Chateau-Thierry and after he finished telling me what he had been through, I then began to think that we had been having child's play.

Before I caught the train back to Cornieville, I bought many souvenirs and sent them home.

When we returned to Cornieville, others were allowed to go to Nancy and Toul. We stayed in reserve a week. We could do very little drilling on account of the airplane observers. A detail of men

went to the rifle range every day and practiced rifle shooting and throwing hand grenades.

THE INTERPRETER GETS A CALL

While back here in reserve we often had visits from staff officers both from our various headquarters and the French headquarters. About the third day we were in Cornieville a French car rolled up in front of battalion headquarters and stopped and a French General stepped out. He was the Commander of the 32nd French Corps, and at this time our division formed a part of that corps. He came by to talk with Major Buxton with reference to how and where we would assemble and what would be our attacking formation and tactics if the Germans should make an attack on our front. Major Buxton was well versed in French but he decided that it would be best to have our old friend, Jouffrett, to interpret for him.

In a few minutes an orderly had the interpreter at headquarters. Mr. Jouffrett became confused and nervous when he saw the oak leaves on a cap on the table for he knew that a French General was there. He saluted the General and then Major Buxton told Mr. Jouffrett that he wanted him to do some interpreting. Jouffrett then began to twist his mus-

tache, first with one hand, then the other, a great habit of the old interpreter. He wanted and tried to do his best for the French General, but he became so excited that in a few minutes he was talking French to Major Buxton and English to the General, and the General became so provoked that he dismissed Jouffrett and he and Major Buxton got along very well without an interpreter.

About 2:00 o'clock the next morning when our men were peacefully sleeping in the hay lofts of the village barns the officer of the guard went to Major Buxton's room and aroused him. He told Major Buxton there was a French courier with him who insisted on delivering a message to the Major in person. Major Butxon read the order by candle light. It was written in French and signed by General Passage. We were directed to take up an alert position at once in the Bois de Jury—the heavy woods and plateau on our west.

Major Buxton immediately told the officer of the guard to blow "call to arms." The Company Commanders and other officers instantly rushed to battalion headquarters and there found Major Buxton, who pointed out the positions on the map that we were to take up and in ten minutes after "call to arms" was blown the battalion was out of the village.

General Lindsey, our Brigade Commander, told Major Buxton that the Commander of the French Corps complimented him on the speed shown by our battalion and he was now satisfied the Americans were well trained and on the alert.

BACK TO THE FRONT

After a ten days' stay in Cornieville we moved up a few miles in the woods called Gerard Sas, where we stayed ten days in support. While here we slept and rested during the day and some nights went to the front to dig trenches and lay barbed wire entanglements out in No Man's Land. We were practically hidden while in these woods from observation of the enemy airplanes. One afternoon while here, Captain Tillman and I walked down the road through the woods about two hundred yards for a little pistol practice. Reverend John W. Bradberry of Chicago, Ill., our Y. M. C. A. Secretary, came by with his kodak and took our picture. He gave us the prints a few days later and I sent mine home.

After our stay in these woods we moved up for our second stay in the front lines. On the way back into the trenches we passed a Red Cross hut in Raulecourt where we were served hot chocolate and cakes. Lieutenant Fred Barker of Bradentown, Flor-

Captain
J. M. Tillman

Lieutenant
Frank A. Holden

ida, was in charge of this hut and before I go further, I want to say something about Lieutenant Barker. The following is the first part of an article with reference to him that appeared in a Harrisburg (Pa.) paper, written by Melville H. James:

"I used to know a man
In Ebensburg
Up in the mountains
Above Altoona
Who had a fine home
A beautiful wife,
Three dandy children,
And a rosy future.
The skies held no clouds
For Fred Barker—
That was his name.
He summered in Ebensburg,
And in the winter
He went to Florida.
He was a dandy fellow.
When the war came
He used to read the papers
And clench his fists
At the stories of
Hun atrocities
And he wanted to enlist
And go over and fight
But luck wasn't with him
And still he read the papers
And clenched his fists
And swore softly,

He dreamed dreams
And he had visions
Of himself
Helping out—some way
Any way.
Finally he got a chance
And he went to France."

Yes, he went to France, and the good work he did would fill volumes. Lieutenant Barker served us on relief nights (and any other time, too) as we marched past his hut out of the trenches, tired, dirty and sleepy, on our way back to our much needed rest. He served us hot coffee and chocolate as we passed by on our way into the trenches, warming and strengthening us as we would begin our stay at the front. We all loved him, and he thought so much of us. He said he wanted to follow the 328th Infantry when we went into the drive. He did follow us, he followed us into the dangerous places—places that he did not have to be in and he followed us until the 14th of October when a shell came over and killed him and our Chaplain, Lieutenant Daniel S. Smart, whom you will read about later.

We went back into the trenches feeling like veterans. Nothing unusual happened during our second stay at the front. We saw the same sights that we witnessed when there before; we had the same noisy

nights and occasionally a night of stillness. Some of our men got mighty restless and began to wonder why we did not go ahead and fight. Our patrols were complete masters of No Man's Land. Major Buxton got restless, too, and wanted to secure a prisoner. The 82nd Division had been holding a front line sector for over a month and had not taken a prisoner. We had raided German trenches, killing a good many of the enemy and our patrols had on several occasions wounded or killed Germans.

General headquarters back at Chaumont began to wonder why the 82nd Division had not secured a prisoner. Our daily reports were being sent in, but there was nothing much to report. Memorandums from division headquarters were continually reminding us that the division had not taken a prisoner, so the Battalion Commanders of our Brigade (164th) were directed to satisfy themselves personally that everything possible was being done to secure a prisoner.

In compliance with this direction Major Buxton with Lieutenant Kirby Stewart of Bradentown, Florida, and Lieutenant William O. Winston and fifty men from the various platoons started out one night to get a German. I was not on this patrol but I saw them when they returned the next morning and heard what they had to say about Lieutenant

Kirby Stewart's act of great unselfishness and cool judgment. Here is the story:

Their object was a surprise attack. Just as they crept close to the enemy wire, a small German trench mortar (minenwerfer) exploded a bomb just over their heads and three or four machine guns swept the grass of the slope—a flare shot up with its penetrating light and numerous rifles and an occasional rifle grenade joined in the uproar. Our men lay flat and awaited orders. Major Buxton and both the Lieutenants lying near each other, hastily agreed that no "surprise" was any longer possible and only artillery could remove the successive barriers of wire. The men were told to crawl out on their stomachs between flares. The entire party got out in good order. One man lost the tip of his ear, another was scratched across the eyelid and several had bullet holes in their clothes. Our men could not get to these machine guns from which bullets were cutting the weeds just about their heads because the barbed wire strands were as thick as your fingers. Artillery was the only thing that could have cut through this mass of barbed wire. Major Buxton had asked for artillery support to make the raid and insure a prisoner, but it was refused because the French did not want to expend the ammunition.

The Germans were not sure of our location and

were firing a few inches too high. Then Lieutenant Stewart went over to the right about fifty yards and emptied his pistol in order to draw the enemy fire towards his flashes and give his men a chance to creep away.

When Lieutenant Stewart joined his platoon again he had two bullet holes in his overseas cap, one where the bullet entered and the other where it went out. His head was not scratched, but later on when he came to the Argonne fight the Germans shot truer at this brave Lieutenant and on October the 8th, a bullet this time hit just a little below his overseas cap and he passed away not knowing what hit him.

There were many back in our home towns thinking about us, more than some of us realized. While here on the front line I received a bundle of home town papers from Colonel H. C. Tuck. I never see Colonel Tuck now that I do not think of the happy moments he gave me by wrapping some back numbers of the Athens Banner and Herald and mailing them to me, and I read these papers within a few hundred yards of the Germans. After reading them I destroyed the papers as it was dangerous to have newspapers too near the Germans for they made good use of any information they obtained. The home folks often sent me Georgia papers.

BURYING OUR COMRADES

After our week was out in the front line we moved back for our second stay in Cornieville. On the morning of July 17th, the Commander of a nearby field hospital sent word to Major Buxton requesting a burial squad for two boys who had just died from wounds received while in the front line. They were from the 3rd Battalion. I was sent over that afternoon in charge of a squad and a bugler to pay our last tribute to the boys who had just passed away.

We secured a truck from the supply company and drove about five miles to the hospital. When I reported to the Commanding Officer he showed me the little cemetery and gave us some tools and told us to pick out a place and dig the graves. We went a little way back of the hospital on the hillside and at the end of the row of little mounds that covered American heroes we dug two graves with picks and shovels. Then we went back and got the boxes that held the remains of our departed comrades and carried them over and tenderly lowered them into their graves, and after covering them with the soil of suffering France the firing squad fired a last salute. We then made the mounds and stood at attention while the bugler gently sounded taps. My thoughts went back across the sea to where the "home fires were burning."

We did not personally know the boys we had laid to rest but they were from our regiment and were just boys like we were, coming from American homes. One was a corporal and the other a private. What a memory picture I have of it now! I can see my little burial squad as we stood by the graves, having performed our last duty to them as best we could and I feel as if I can almost hear the bugler's notes as they cut the air that afternoon, through woods and over rolling, uncultivated fields of France and died away in the distance.

I wrote down in a notebook the names of the corporal and the private whom we buried, but I am unable to find this little book now. I have hopes of finding it some day and when I do I want to let the parents of the two boys we buried know of the little burial ceremony that afternoon.

As we started back to our truck we noticed on a far away hill quite a few people had gathered. This puzzled us. It was not on our way back to Cornieville, but it was a couple of hours before sundown, so I decided to go over and see what the excitement could be. When we got there we saw a German plane crushed to pieces and a German Lieutenant and private lying in the ruins. Some one had covered their bodies with a piece of cloth. A French officer showed us the dead forms and they were terribly

mangled. I broke off a few pieces of the plane for souvenirs and sent them back in a letter home and to several of my friends, and there is pinned on the letter I now have before me as I write this experience a small piece of light blue canvas that I got that day from the wrecked plane and enclosed in the letter I wrote home that night telling of my experience during the day.

A week in reserve, then back into support again, but this time in the little village of Raulecourt. A week here and then our entire division was relieved by the 89th Division. The Germans learned of this relief in some way and sent over thousands of gas shells in a little patch of woods where some of the 89th Division men were concentrated. There were a few casualties in our division but the reception that the 89th Division received on their first night at the front was pitiful. There were over six hundred gas casualties—they were hauled in by the truck loads.

The 82nd Division was ordered more than forty miles back of the lines, our regiment going to the little village of Rigna La Salle.

MY GREATEST THRILL

We had been at the front more than a month and a half and this was our first real rest. It was great to be back of the lines. This was the first time our

(U. S. Official)

Gassed men of 82nd and 89th Divisions

regiment had gotten together in the same village since we left Le Havre to go back of the British front. We could hear the big guns in the distance but that was all, we were too far away for them to worry us.

There are many thrills that I shall never forget —thrills that have thrilled me through and through and they now linger with me in pleasant memory; but the greatest thrill that I have ever experienced was in this little village of Rigna La Salle, just back of the frontiers of freedom in France, late in the afternoon on August 13, 1918 while at retreat, when I heard for the first time on foreign soil the strains of the Star-Spangled Banner. I can appreciate the remarks of Senator Hoar with reference to his feelings when viewing the flag on an American battleship in a foreign port.

TO ANOTHER FRONT

Just after retreat that afternoon I was handed an order to precede the battalion to our new sector in the front lines. The following is part of a letter I wrote home just before going to the front again:

"France, August 13, 1918.

Dearest Mother:

I have just received an order to precede the battalion again to a front line sector and am now ready

to go. Our battalion will occupy the front line first, the other two battalons going into support and reserve.

I am now in front of the town hall of the little village. The regimental band is playing. They have just played the Marseillaise and the French went wild. But my, what a feeling I had when they played the Star-Spangled Banner this afternoon at retreat; it's more thrilling than ever when you hear it over here.

It is getting dark so must stop. I will be in the front lines again by midnight. A heart full of love.

FRANK."

And so at midnight I was back at the front in the city of Pont-a-Mousson, where our regiment was to relieve the 6th Marines. When I reported to battalion headquarters, I was very much surprised to find it located in a magnificent three-story chateau. I could hardly believe that this large fashionable home could be headquarters of the battalion holding a front line sector.

The battalion that we were to relieve covered themselves with glory at the memorable fighting near Chateau-Thierry and had just been sent to this sector a few days before. Our division was ordered to Chateau-Thierry and would probably have been in the thickest of the fierce fighting there but for some reason our orders were canceled.

"SOLDIERS THREE"

The next day I went to the infirmary near the front lines to get the necessary information about the billets, locations, etc., to give our battalion doctors when they arrived. The infirmary was in a large two-story electric-lighted chateau. While down there I met James Weddington, Jr., from Dublin, Georgia, who was attached to the Medical Corps. After talking to him for several minutes I noticed my college fraternity (Phi Delta Theta) ring on his finger. Right away I thought about Marcus Beck who had been pledged to our fraternity and who was killed at Belleau Woods while serving with the Marines, the outfit that we were relieving. My father had written me to find out all I could about his death and write to his father, Judge Marcus Beck of Atlanta, Georgia. Weddington introduced me to a boy who was with Marcus during the fighting and I learned that Marcus had been fighting over a week and that a little while before he was killed he was standing near his machine gun happy and smiling.

Marcus was below the draft age. A few pages back you read of Lieutenant Barker, above the draft age, being killed in action and now you read of one who was below the age limit. Can you find a more beautiful example of American patriotism than this? The

gray-haired Red Cross man and the youthful marine facing the steel of the enemy side by side with their fellow Americans who answered their country's call! There are many others, God bless them, who boiled over with patriotism for their country and went, although not called, and quite a few are now listed "killed in action" as the two brave Americans above mentioned are listed in the official war records of our country. And thousands of others would have been with us had not family responsibilities and other good reasons prevented.

There's another friend of mine, "killed in action," that I am thinking of as I write these lines. During the years from 1907 to 1911 inclusive, Judge Marcus Beck, Judge Beverly D. Evans and my father worked together as Justices of the Supreme Court of Georgia and were close neighbors in Atlanta and they never then thought their boys who were playing together would in 1918 be fighting in Europe in a World War. Judge Beverly D. Evans' son, Beverly, like Judge Marcus Beck's son, Marcus, was killed in action. Beverly received his commission as Second Lieutenant of Infantry with me at the First Officers' Training Camp at Fort McPherson, Georgia, and was assigned to the 56th Infantry at Chickamauga Park. Here the 20th Machine Gun Battalion was formed in which he afterward became a First Lieutenant. He

was killed during an advance, by shrapnel fire on November 1st, in the Meuse-Moselle sector near Preney, France, "while giving commands at one of his machine guns."*

Beverly's remains, wrapped in the Stars and Stripes, were laid to rest in his boyhood home, Sandersville, Ga., August 7th, 1921, and a month later Marcus Beck's remains were buried 'neath the Red Old Hills of Georgia in sight of the house in which he was born at Jackson, Ga. Noble Stibolt came all the way from his home in Chicago to witness the last ceremony of his pal and buddie. Noble never knew Marcus until they met in the Marines, but the friendship that exists between two buddies who slept, marched, fought and faced death together over there is cemented by bands that never bend nor break.

Some parents will leave their brave boys buried in the soil on which they fell; others want them nearer home where they can often visit their graves. Their wishes about this are, as they should be, respected by our Government.

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*Since this was written Judge Evans has passed away and is buried by his hero son.

PONT-A-MOUSSON

This time I preceded the battalion two days and so I finished locating the various billets and had some time to spare and was able to see something of the city of Pont-a-Mousson. In peace time the city was quite an industrial center.

The first thing I observed particularly was the big iron works and I noticed they were practically untouched. I understood that quite a bit of German capital was interested in this plant and that was the reason it was not shelled or bombed by the airplanes.

The depot was the most deserted looking place I saw. I went through the building. The floors were covered with broken window panes, the outside walls were marked by shelling and bombing. Weeds had grown up between the double tracks and an airplane bomb had been dropped through the shed and had broken the rails beneath.

On the east side of the Moselle river which divided the city was probably the tallest mountain that stood on the western front, and this time it was in our favor because it was on our side of the lines. On top of this mountain was a beautiful statue of Joan of Arc. It is reported that the Kaiser and the Crown Prince expected and had planned to view from the top of this mountain, their armies sweeping through the vil-

lages towards the south into Nancy, but this was only one of their many dreams that "never came true."

That afternoon, before our battalion was due to come up, James Weddington and I climbed this mountain (from the back side, of course.) There was a good system of trenches on top of the mountain which we went into and we followed one of these trenches which led to the foot of the statue of Joan of Arc. Here were a good many observers and one of them let us have his field glass for a few minutes. Straight ahead for miles and miles we could see the winding Moselle and about five miles up the river we could see the Germans bathing in the stream. To the right in the distance we saw the city of Metz and the great fortifications around that city. We also saw what was said to be the Crown Prince's summer home.

After the first year of the war neither the German nor French front lines moved at this front and there was very little activity here. This was even a more quiet sector than the one we had just left. There were a number of French inhabitants living in the city, but as we began to move in they began to move out.

I think there was kind of a "gentleman's agreement" between the French and German divisions at

this particular place on the front that they would do very little fighting. Divisions on both sides at the front had been sent down from northern France where there was activity more or less all the time, so both Germans and Frenchmen here would be worn, tired and nervous and they desired to rest. Then, too, they had learned that fighting down in this part of France would not have much to do with deciding the war nor help much to hasten its end. So French families could live in their homes in practical safety in the city of Pont-a-Mousson. But the French inhabitants knew the Americans were fresh and new in the war and were restless; they knew we could not remain quiet long but would want to start something so we could hasten the end of the war and go back home, and they knew when we started something the Germans would retaliate and begin dropping shells on their homes. Hence, as we moved in they moved out, leaving their homes and furnishings.

That night my battalion took over our new sector. The next day Captain Tillman said he needed me back with the company so Major Buxton sent me back to my platoon. The first platoon, under Lieutenant Brown, was the only platoon in the trenches from our company. Lieutenant Kirby's platoon was billeted in a three-story brick building, which appeared

(U. S. Official)

Railroad Station, Pont-a-Mousson, France

to have been used for a boarding school in peace time.

While here holding this front line sector some of the men of our battalion were billeted in very good deserted homes. The inhabitants who moved out when we arrived left some of the very finest gardens. Patrick Cody of New York City, who was Captain Tillman's orderly, was very successful in locating good gardens, and Captain Tillman, Lieutenant Kirby, Lieutenant Joel and I had the very choicest vegetables every day at noon. At night we ate by an electric light, quite a contrast from the dim, flickering candles that we had been accustomed to at the front. There was a fine piano in the dwelling house in which company headquarters was located. We were too near the enemy to play the piano but it did us good just to look at it. Some of the French wine and beer were no stronger than our grape juice. Almost every afternoon an old man and his little girl would drive by in front of company headquarters selling beer. It was difficult to realize that we were holding a front line sector and at the same time having such comforts and luxuries.

The reason that we had such freedom on this front is because No Man's Land in some places was three quarters of a mile wide and we had one company from our battalion divided into "out posts"

and the other three companies acted in support of the "out post" company.

Lieutenant Judson Garner from Macon, Ga., the Battalion Intelligence Officer, sent a patrol order to Captain Tillman about noon on August 21. The order read that one officer from Company H and 15 men would lead a patrol that night at a certain time and lie in ambush and wait for enemy patrol. The purpose of the patrol was to secure identification of the enemy. Captain Tillman ordered me to take this patrol out that night. The night before Lieutenant Joel led a patrol. Up to this time the 82nd Division had not captured a prisoner.

Just before time to go out I got my men together and gave them a talk. I inspected to see if any had a cold and finding one with a little cough I substituted another in his place. I also inspected to see that no one was wearing a phosphorous wrist watch that would shine in the dark. A listening post out in No Man's Land could easily detect a patrol by the coughing of one of our men or by a shining wrist watch.

Just before I left on the patrol I wrote the following letter home:

"France, August 21, 1918.

Dear home folks:

Just a little note to you all as it's nearly time for

me to take some members of my platoon on a patrol. I hope we bring back a prisoner. The Oppice boy is no longer in my platoon, but is the captain's runner. He has just asked me to let him go with us tonight. I told him all right, if the captain said so. Lots of others asked to go but I can't take more than the order calls for unless they get special permission. I know I'll come out all right. I know that you are praying for me and I'm not the least bit afraid. I'll write you about it tomorrow. I'm well and happy. Love to all. FRANK."

The moon was shining bright that night, a bad night for patrolling. We left our trenches and went out in No Man's Land. What I saw of my patrol climbing over the trench and walking slowly through No Man's Land on that moonlit night makes pictures that are hidden away in my memory, pictures that I so often recall. Some had little bags of hand grenades, a few had pistols and the rest carried rifles. We went up along the right side of the Nancy-Metz railroad. After some little distance out we got into a deep trench. On our left was the high railroad bank, on our right thick barbed wire entanglements. We started to go up this deep trench some distance but the thought came to me how a German patrol up this cut could send a machine gun (they often carried machine guns on their patrols) down the other

side of the railroad track and slip in behind us and then sweep the trench with machine gun fire.

I then led my men back a little way and walked up the canal to a mound where we stopped and lay in ambush. We were to stay out until three-fifteen. On our right was a path that the German patrol came down two nights before and began cutting our wire when our men opened fire on them.

We were very nicely concealed in the bushes on the slope of this mound and my plan was if they came down the path that night to wait until they had passed and then open fire. About two o'clock one of my men crawled over to me and said one of the men reported he heard wire cutting just ahead. I sent him word not to fire until they came nearer and in sight. What he heard was probably the "point" of a German patrol. The "point" consists of one or two men who usually precede their patrol to prevent it from running into the enemy patrol unexpectedly. They must have heard our men crawling for no other sounds were reported. It was a good thing that the patrol order called for an ambush patrol as the moon was shining too brightly for any other kind. There are several kinds of patrols. The reconnoitering patrol is mainly to find out the lay of the land and positions. Combat patrolling is mainly

for fighting and some patrol orders read that patrol shall gain and maintain contact with the enemy.

The next time you are in the woods at night, I want you to imagine that you are out there "man hunting," then you will have an idea of how it feels to be on a patrol, otherwise you will never quite realize the thrill.

Three-fifteen finally came and we marched back to our billets. The next morning I wrote home. A part of the letter is copied below:

"France, August 22, 1918.

Dear Papa:

I have just eaten breakfast and dinner at the same time. I was tired when I came in from my patrol early this morning so slept late. I have quite a bit of mail to censor. You see I keep pretty busy. Nothing unusual happened last night. We were hoping to meet a German patrol, but didn't.

The French continue to gain, as you see from the papers. I read yesterday's Paris edition of the New York Herald and Chicago Tribune this morning. My orderly brought them to me before I got up, so I lay in bed awhile and read them. It is wonderful the way our Government is sending so many men over. The more the better. Even though Germany is beginning to realize that she cannot win, yet she is going to fight desperately until the last. We are full of enthusiasm and want to finish Germany good and proper before we quit. Of course, I want to get back home, but, like all the other American boys,

wouldn't feel right in going back until Germany gives up or is run out of all the territory she occupies that is not hers, and is made to pay for the damage she has done, and also made to remove those in power over her. Then our mission will have been accomplished, and the boys will go 'marching home.'

I have just been talking to Captain Fonville McWhorter. He has his machine gun company mixed in with our company. These are bad nights for patrolling. The moon shines almost as bright as day, but in the Americans' sector, No Man's Land is our land. These moonshining nights are great nights for air raids, because it is difficult for our search lights to penetrate the moonlight; so it is hard to find the planes so as to shoot the anti-aircraft guns at them. Every night we hear the German planes going over to bomb one of our nearby cities, and we also hear our planes going over to bomb a nearby city of theirs. I saw our anti-aircraft hit a German plane yesterday. It broke one of its wings, and the plane started wobbling. It was high, and it wobbled down and fell on the German side of the lines. I can think of nothing else to write you this time. I hope to get some mail tonight. Love to all.

FRANK."

A LONG NIGHT

A few nights after that General Lindsey sent for Captain Tillman to come to battalion headquarters. Company "H" was then Regimental Reserve. The General told Captain Tillman that they expected the

Germans to make a general attack on our front that night. He did not say why he expected an attack. We had various ways of finding out when and where the Germans would attack. Our many observation balloons often detected German troop trains back of their lines in the day time; sometimes they discovered new ammunition dumps and various other preparations necessary for making a drive; sometimes we secured information from prisoners; any way our General expected a drive on our front THAT night.

After looking over the map showing the locations of our men, General Lindsey told Captain Tillman to have my platoon go out in the trenches just to the left of the town as he thought the Germans would try to take Pont-a-Mousson by flanking the city, coming down through the valley to our left. Captain Tillman returned to the company and sent for me. After showing me these trenches on a map he and I went out and located them. I returned and carried my platoon out there.

I told my platoon that we expected something to happen that night. I placed them in the trenches on the hillside almost in the bottom of the valley where General Lindsey thought the first waves of the enemy would sweep down into the city. I kept most of my men awake, letting a few sleep at a time in reliefs. I did not expect the drive to start until the early

dawn and not a sound was heard until then. The popping noise of a machine gun broke the silence about 4:30. I felt then the drive had started. I sent a runner to wake up my men. I felt that it was just a question of a few minutes before the first wave would be coming over the hill and down the valley, and after that the "moppers up" to get those of us the first wave failed to get. I saw the end near but not until we had played our part as best we could.

I listened for more machine gun fire. I listened to hear rifles firing. I listened to hear the whistling of the first shell from the artillery barrage that usually precedes the attack, shelling the front line trenches into horrible scenes which are almost beyond description; I looked to see the liquid fire streaming toward us; I looked to see a dark, dense smoke screen creeping nearer and nearer, concealing the first attacking troops; I waited to smell the deadly fumes of a gas cloud; but these things I expected to hear and see never occurred. The popping of the machine gun was the only sound we heard that night on our front. War is like life, oftentimes what we most expect never happens, and so frequently the unexpected occurs.

The next day, behind the little hill of trenches, we rested underneath small trees and bushes out of sight

of the enemy's airplane observers and talked and slept almost all day. I sent a detail down to Pont-a-Mousson at noon for our dinner.

That night (August 24) a little after dark our battalion was relieved and we marched back to a camp in the woods on the outskirts of Liverdun, a little town on the Paris-Nancy railroad. It was here that our Gas Officer was sent back to the States as an instructor, and I was ordered to the A. E. F. Gas School at Chaumont.

After a week of intensive training at the Gas School, Lieutenant Sam Proctor and I left together for our outfit by way of Paris.

PARIS PLEASURES SUDDENLY END

On Monday night, September 9th, 1918, I was sitting in a celebrated Paris restaurant enjoying one of those delightfully cooked meals that make the French cafes world famous. But my pleasure was suddenly brought to an end when I heard an American officer at the table next to me say that the St. Mihiel drive had started two days before. I thought it was rather strange there were no accounts in the papers about it as the three Paris dailies published in English always gave the accounts of the fighting. This officer said that they were keeping this drive out of the papers. I could see preparations being made

for the drive before I left Pont-a-Mousson for the Gas School.

After hearing the above, Paris held no charms for me. The delicious dishes, the fine linen and silver, the beautiful decorations—these things that I seemed to have craved and seemed to have been enjoying to the fullest now were no longer attractive to me.

I began to wonder then if I should have been routed back to my outfit through Paris. But it was the almost unbroken custom to go back through Paris after the strenuous week at the Gas School.

I had just learned how important the duties of a Gas Officer were. I learned that the majority of the American casualties were caused from gas. I learned a mustard gas shell could burst on a cold day and do very little damage and several days afterwards the sun could come out and warm up the earth around the hole that the shell had made and troops could be fatally gassed by passing over this shell hole, and I learned many other things at the Gas School that would prevent casualties. It was our duty to detect the kind of gas by numerous tests and tell the men when it was safe to pull off their masks.

I thought about our being in the drive and how often the Germans made use of their deadly gas; and the more I thought of all this the more my heart ached. How could I enjoy the pleasures of Paris

when I thought that my battalion was in the fight?

That night I caught the fast Paris-Nancy express. When I arrived in Nancy I found out, much to my relief, that the drive had not started. Most of my way from there to Pont-a-Mousson, where my battalion was on the front lines again, was up the winding beautiful Moselle river.

On the west side of the river were large naval guns, safely hidden by skillful camouflaging. These were the big guns that were to play upon the fortifications at Metz. I feel as if I can now hear the great roar these big naval guns made the next day when they chimed in occasionally with the almost continuous lesser roaring of the smaller guns. The naval gun's discharge was clear and distinct, fairly shaking the earth around its base.

I arrived at battalion headquarters about dark and it was then I learned the sad news that our Major had been transferred. That night we held a battalion officers' meeting—our last before our first real engagement. So often had we gathered together in officers' meetings. Way back—it seemed ages ago then—before we left the States, we had our officers' meetings; coming over on the boat we would gather together to discuss orders and everything one could imagine for the welfare of the battalion and at all of these meetings our friend and leader, Major Bux-

ton, presided over us, and now at our last meeting before the drive, he was absent. Not only the officers but the men had heard the news and they, too, were feeling his absence.

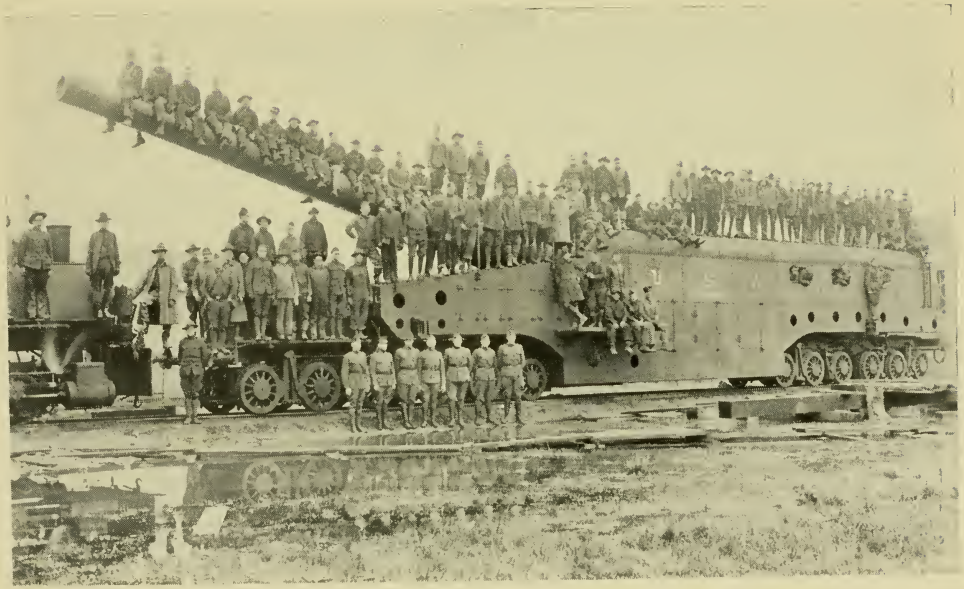
As we sat there that night, Captain Howell Foreman, Acting Major, read the battle order. We had gone over and discussed everything. We knew which company would go over first and in what formation and how the other companies would follow. I shall never forget that long dead stillness as we were about to adjourn the last meeting before the drive. I looked around the room and the expression on the faces showed that somebody was missing. A knock on the door broke the stillness and in walked our leader. Worried faces brightened into smiles and heavy hearts lightened when Major Buxton announced that he was back with us for the drive.

Just after the meeting, I wrote a hurried note home:

"France, Sept. 11, 1918.

Dearest home folks:

I have been mighty busy today, but I can't do another thing until I write to you. Am at the front again. I have just returned from the Gas School, and as I expected, I had lots of mail that had accumulated while I was away. I get so many letters from so many people and they are all so nice. If I had to name just one thing that helps more than any



(U. S. Official)

other to make a boy feel good when he is fighting so far away from home, I would say it is letters from home. Letters are the main thing that keep us constantly in touch with civilization. The letter from Dr. E. L. Hill did me so much good. Letters like that make me want to fight all the harder.

I saw Paris on my way back from the Gas School. It's a wonderful city. I couldn't help but be impressed with one fact, and that was I saw no signs of real poverty or hardships. A magnificent city of millions, so near the front, and no beggars, streets crowded, department stores packed with customers, plenty of taxis.

I'm praying for all of us over here, and you all over there, and hope and believe everything will come out all right.

Please be bright, cheerful and happy no matter what happens. My whole heart full of love to all. I'll write again when I can. Am well and happy.

Affectionately,
FRANK."

OUT OF THE STILLNESS

How often have I seen a black cloud roll madly between me and the shining sun and in a little while the stillness of the summer's afternoon broken by loud blasts of thunder and fierce flashes of lightning. And so, too, on the morning of September the 12th, 1918, at 1:00 A. M., the dead stillness of the night

was broken by the roaring and thundering of thousands of our guns that started the greatest barrage of the World War up to that time, with four hours of continuous artillery fire using more than 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition and at 5:00 A. M., just as day was breaking, our first waves of infantrymen went over the top.

I can see now the constant flashes from artillery that made night seem almost like day and I can hear the terrific explosions from the big guns sending out sound waves that made the air around us quiver.

For three years the St. Mihiel salient was comparatively a quiet resting place for worn out divisions. Now the American boys, mostly in their twenties, were about to make their first major offensive in the World War. Boys who, the German High Command said, would never get across the sea, and if they did could never withstand the trained armies of his wonderful Empire—these boys were now going into a major offensive that would add glory to the record already achieved at Chateau-Thierry and another stepping stone to fighting just a few weeks ahead that would prove to be the brightest page in American battles fought on foreign soil. Thus the drive began that resulted in over 16,000 of the enemy captured and many French villages liberated.

Our regiment was on the pivot of the "swing in,"

so to speak, of the salient. The first day of the drive (Sept. 12) our battalion did not advance, as we were waiting for the 90th Division on our left to straighten out the line, but our artillery sent over many shells about a mile north of us into and around the town of Norroy. One company from our battalion (Company F) sent out platoons during the day. Lieutenant Bertrand Cox, Lieutenant Charles Harrison and Lieutenant James Gould carried their platoons out, gaining contact with the enemy. Late that afternoon, I was with Major Buxton as runners would bring in reports about the fighting of Captain Foreman's company. I shall never forget what our Major said when he received the news that Lieutenant Charles Harrison of Columbus, Ga., had been killed. He thought a minute and then said that if it had to happen he was glad that Charles did not have to suffer any. He said that he could not bear the thought of Charles having to suffer or being captured and mistreated.

It seems that the death angel takes the brightest and happiest when he visits our homes in peace time and the same seemed to me true in war that afternoon, for on the battlefield he had taken the flower of our battalion. We never gathered together that Charles' presence did not fill our hearts with sunshine. Very seldom that he did not start the

"bunch" to singing bright, cheery songs, and I can hear him now leading his favorite,

"It's always fair weather
When good fellows come together."

How hard it was for us to realize that Charles had been killed. And while I was thinking about Charles, the thought ran through my mind that this was only the beginning, that those of us who would come through alive would see many of our comrades laid to rest amid the shell holes, and before a month had passed, gas, bullets and shrapnel had dropped many of our comrades amongst the poppies. Are you not thinking how, or rather have you not often thought, of how we felt as our comrades fell in battle? Some may think that in the excitement of the fighting we would not have time to feel the loss of our buddies, but not so. Always fighting with the fierce American spirit but never did a member of our battalion family fall out that it did not seem as if daggers were piercing our hearts. How could it be otherwise? Side by side we had trained, marched and slept together, and then when our ranks began thinning out in line of battle, our hearts ached and bled with indescribable, silent grief, as on that afternoon when we heard that Lieutenant Charles Harrison lay out between us and the enemy, having given everything for America.

NORROY

The afternoon of September 13, 1918, battalion headquarters moved out to the front line and advanced with the companies as soon as the various elements of the battalion could be assembled for the attack. The 327th Infantry was just across the Moselle river on our right. Lieutenant W. M. Weaver, from Macon, Ga., a first cousin of mine, was in this regiment. Just before we "went over the top" at the end of the afternoon, I watched a raid by the 327th on Bel Air Farm. It was too far away to see any of the men, but there was evidence of quite a bit of fighting. I saw what I thought to be a smoke screen and various forms of liquid fire, heard the popping of machine guns and saw a great deal of shelling. All the time I was wondering about my cousin.

Just before we were ready to start over, old Jouffrett, the interpreter, got a bad case of rheumatism and he told me he did not think he could make it, as he could hardly walk, but the next day he showed up in Norroy and was certainly glad to see me.

Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Wetherill was now with us. He, Major Buxton, Lieutenant Wood, battalion headquarters' runners and I pushed across No Man's

Land towards Norroy with the other companies in the early dusk. We did not follow the roads as we thought they would probably be shelled, so we cut across the fields and our progress was slowed very much by the great mass of barbed wire entanglements. As we got about half way to Norroy, we noticed a house in the town on fire. In a few minutes the blazes from this house brightened up so that we were able to see the outline of the housetops in the village. I thought the Germans on leaving had set the town on fire, but later it was discovered that only one home burned, and this is supposed to have been fired by reason of the shelling from our artillery.

I remember as we were walking along I heard a peculiar whistling noise in the bushes nearby. I told Colonel Wetherill and Major Buxton that it might be a German giving signals. We stopped and found that it was just an innocent little bird. Every little noise attracted us. Just before we reached the outskirts of Norroy, we heard voices a little to our right. We found it was Lieutenant Kirby Stewart talking to his platoon, getting them through some bad places.

We entered Norroy through a hole in a stone wall that a shell had made, and walked up a side street into the main street of the town. The only noise

that we heard was the running of water in the little fountain in the middle of the main street and a few barks from a lonely dog.

But we were not alone in Norroy that night. We thought we were, but there were others—others whose hearts were heavy—others who had endured years of hardships under the enemy and now were subjected to the most terrible horrors and fright.

Four years (lacking ten days) before this time, the Germans entered and captured the town and with it many inhabitants who did not have time to escape. The Germans sent some of the inhabitants back to work in ammunition factories and do other work, and some were kept in the town to work for the soldiers holding it. We dropped many shells into Norroy before going into the town. The Germans as they withdrew tried to carry all of the French inhabitants with them. They left in such a hurry that about seventeen (mostly old men and women) hid in the cellars. It is reported that they dragged an old Priest out bareheaded.

About an hour after we went into Norroy, I dozed off to sleep for a few hours and awoke just as it was getting light. I decided to walk around the town and started out a street toward the northern end of the village. I looked up and I could hardly believe what I saw before me—it was a woman running towards

me, crying, with mouth bleeding and body trembling. She tried to tell me her feelings. The Germans had warned her against the American soldiers. Down the street she could see other American soldiers who were also rambling around. After going through the awful shelling the night and day before she probably thought that she had now reached the end of it all. Of the little French I knew, none of it seemed to fit in a case like this, but I think she could tell from my expression and the soft way I patted her on her arm that the Americans were not there to harm her, but instead to deliver her from four long years of anxious, weary and dreadful life.

I then sent for one of my men who could speak French and he assured her in the best French words he could possibly put together, that the Americans had come over to help fight for her country. She recovered from her fright and carried us about two blocks away and down into a cellar, where a lady wounded during the shelling was lying on a bed and crying. She told us of her old father who was caught underneath a fallen building nearby.

As the sun rose higher and higher we could see more and more of the inhabitants coming out of cellars. We advised them to get out of the town as quickly as possible. I can see the picture now they made leaving Norroy that afternoon, sixteen or sev-

enteen of them, mostly old men and women, carrying in their little baskets strapped on their backs all they were able to take away. They hadn't gone very far before they heard their home town shelled by the Germans as it was never shelled before. At the same time it was gassed with a deadly gas.

I went back down the street to where we had our battalion headquarters, and I found a dozen or more gathered around a tall, shabbily dressed, hungry looking prisoner. We asked him many questions. He said a number of Germans did not withdraw from the town until shortly before we entered. This was evident by the food we found on several tables partly eaten. The prisoner said he had no idea of the number of American soldiers in France.

There were many interesting things discovered that morning as we scattered through the town. The first thing I saw of interest was a German officers' club room. In it were a number of cigarettes and a good many boxes of cigars. I found a box of cigars named the "Kaiser."

The Germans seemed to have plenty of sugar and a good deal of American canned milk. After I rambled through these club rooms I went next door. "Have a drink, Lieutenant?" one of my old platoon boys said, who was behind the counter and serving beer to his friends. He turned the faucet under-

neath the counter and the beer came out of a long curved tube that reached about three feet above the counter. It reminded me of the way the drug stores served drinks when I was a little boy. Then I walked out and saw my old platoon boys rolling a keg of beer down the street over the rough stones that had fallen from the wrecked stores.

Do not misunderstand me here. At no time did wine or beer interfere with the American boys fighting. The beer in Norroy was mild and the men in the town touched it sparingly.

Almost every little French village had a flowing fountain on the main street in the center of the village. This part of France is hilly and most of the towns were built in valleys and the inhabitants could utilize their springs and little streams to good advantage.

A number of boys were shaving at the fountain in Norroy that morning. Laying their steel mirrors on the stone around the fountain and lathering their faces with the fresh flowing water, they made a picture that made one feel as if the war was being fought far away.

We found several goats and a number of fat Belgian rabbits left in the town and our mess sergeant planned a big feast, but you will see later we had no time for feasting.

This good time walking through the town, looking for souvenirs, etc., did not last long. The Germans were never idle. Their field glasses were focused on us from nearby hilltops, and it was not long before they communicated to their artillery that Norroy was filled with American soldiers.

THE GAS ATTACK

Just before the shelling began our old interpreter came up to me and said: "Mr. Holden, have you an extra gas mask for me? I left mine in Pont-a-Mousson."

Fortunately, I had one extra mask that I brought with me through the thick barbed wire entanglements the night before into Norroy. Sometimes a piece of shrapnel would hit a mask and thereby render it useless, so I carried an extra one for use in case of emergency. This was an emergency. A few minutes after I gave Mr. Jouffrett the mask the shelling began and if I had not carried the extra mask with me the old man would never have done any more banking business in Paris.

The shelling began about noon. The little village was in a valley. The Germans had weather experts on every front and they always figured in their gas attacks. That afternoon the wind was blowing mild-

ly in a southeastern direction. The Germans dropped their first shells (about three hundred) filled with sneezing gas, in the northwestern part of the town and this sneezing gas was blown through the town.

I was Battalion Gas Officer. At the Gas School I became familiar with the odor of the gases and when the first shell burst I immediately detected sneezing gas and knew that we were in for a siege of it. I went through the village and the trenches near the village to have every man put on his gas mask. Some had theirs on before I got to them.

I knew that the sneezing gas was a forerunner of some of the fatal gases. Their object was to get our men to sneezing so they would not be able to keep on their masks when they shelled us with their deadly gas. I only remember one man who sneezed so that he was unable to keep on his mask.

After the village was filled with this sneezing gas the shelling ceased. It was then that my Gas Sergeant and I kept busy running through Norroy, telling the men to keep on their masks; that if they did not they would be unable by inhaling the sneezing gas to keep them on in a few minutes when we would be shelled with phosgene or mustard gas.

The Germans decided on their deadly mustard gas and they began sending it over mixed with high explosives. They were trying to scatter it so that the

liquid would spatter on us, burning our flesh before it evaporated into the fumes when it would burn our lungs. Shells filled with shrapnel and gas were bursting through the town and many of them hit very close to us.

About 3:00 o'clock I went into battalion headquarters, a hall which the Germans used for a soldiers' club and dining room. It was rather dark in there. High explosives were knocking down a few large buildings just a little way up the street. My! what if one of those big shells had hit this old hall. Lieutenant Wood was trying to take orders over the phone from regimental headquarters with his mask on. There were about thirty men in the room. Colonel Wetherill would ask me every now and then if it was safe for them to take off their masks. I would test and say "No!" and they would all give a long sigh. I then ran out on the hillside in the trenches and scented no gas there at all, but when I looked down into Norroy the gas clung in the valley town as smoke settles in lowlands on a hot summer's afternoon.

While returning to battalion headquarters, I passed Lieutenant Joel stretched out in a doorway. He had gotten too much gas, but soon recovered after staying in a hospital a few days. When I arrived at battalion headquarters I found the hall still filled

with gas. I then went out on the northwestern edge of the town and found a house there that would do for battalion headquarters. I immediately went again to battalion headquarters and suggested to Major Buxton to move headquarters out there, which he did. How lucky we were in doing so, because not long after that shells knocked this building down, and if we had stayed there probably all of us would have been buried beneath the fallen walls. After moving to our new headquarters we pulled off our masks after wearing them four long hours. Here we stayed until midnight, when the 3rd Battalion under Major Hammond Johnson, of Athens, Ga., relieved us.

When the shelling ceased for a while during the afternoon, stretcher bearers began bringing the wounded from the 360th Infantry of the 90th Division through Norroy. Some of the wounded men had to stay in Norroy until after dark as the roads back of the town were under enemy observation and were being shelled and very few ambulances could get through.

One of the wounded was too pitiful to describe. He had to sit up on the stretcher. His back, chest and face were a solid burning blister where the horrible mustard gas had spattered on him. Not only that, but the awful gas fumes had gotten into his lungs and he was breathing heavily. This, I think,

was the most pitiful sight I saw in France. With a high fever, sick, and suffering agonies, he could not lie down. Every step the stretcher bearers took meant more pain to this boy—and yet with it all I saw him smile. They were out of water and I held my canteen to his feverish lips and I saw a smile come on his burning and blistered face.

There was one casualty during that afternoon from Company "H" I wish to mention. Lacey M. Strickland, present Tax Collector of Elbert County, Georgia, was hit by a high explosive and immediately became blind, deaf and dumb and his mind for several months afterwards was a complete blank. He regained consciousness five months later in a hospital in Buffalo, N. Y. His recovery was a miracle to the medical profession.

When we left the town it was still saturated with the gas and I stationed guards at both ends of the main street to prevent any one from passing through the village until they put on their masks.

We went back of the lines that night for a much needed rest. Major Johnson's Battalion was ordered to advance the next day in broad daylight, in plain view of the enemy artillery, and they suffered many casualties before they reached their objective.

About midnight we started marching back. I stopped and slept a few hours in our old battalion

headquarters in Pont-a-Mousson. I heard the German artillery knocked this chateau down a few days after we were relieved.

It was noon the next day when we arrived in Dieulouard, a little village a few miles further back. I got something to eat and then went to sleep about 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, in a soft bed in an upstairs room in a deserted home, and slept until noon the next day. I was amazed when I awoke from my long sleep to find in the road, about 50 yards from the house in which I had slept so soundly, that a shell from a long range German gun that night had killed several men and four horses. The men had been removed when I saw the scene, but the four large horses lay stretched on the ground, disjointed and mangled.

Then I went to the company kitchen to get something to eat, where I learned that when the shelling began nearly everybody ran to the large dugouts in the hillside and spent the night in them. After I finished eating, I went down the hill and sat alone for an hour by the little creek. How quiet it seemed—a lull after so much noise and confusion, the stillness and calm only broken by the sound of the stream running over the rocks.

After thinking of all I had been through and seen, I wanted to write home, and while everything was

fresh on my mind I went back to my room and wrote the following letter:

"Monday, Sept. 16, 1918.

Dearest Mama and Papa:

After hours of terrific artillery bombardment, I climbed a tall tree at early dawn last Friday the 13th, and saw our advance waves go over the top, which started our big 'birthday present' drive for General Pershing. Later on in the day I went over the top and about twelve o'clock that night we were in ———— town. (Note: Stating names of towns in letters then forbidden by censor.)

I have often thought how others and I would feel just before going over the top. I have often wondered if there would be any signs of sadness. Every man seemed happy, cheerful and bright, and the expression I heard most was 'with the best of luck' as friends would pass 'going over.'

I guess you are wondering now about the casualties. I am not allowed to tell who they are, but can say they were light. I emptied my canteen giving the wounded water. They were all smiles, not a groan did I hear from any of them. (Here I told in detail about my experience in Norroy, which I have already written.)

I guess you are wondering where I am. Major Johnson's Battalion relieved us and we are back of him. I think he has advanced further. I was completely worn out and I am just up now from twenty-two hours of sleep. I had slept but little for three days, and until breakfast this morning I had only a

bar of chocolate, some hard tack and a box of sardines to eat.

Almost every one else slept in a dugout last night. They went to them when the Germans sent over some of their big long range shells, which hit nearby. I would have gone too, had I heard them. One hit about 50 yards from me; I slept too soundly to hear it.

I have so many things to tell that I'll wait and write them later; then there are so many things I would like to write, but am not allowed.

I have often heard of little steel mirrors and little trench Bibles warding off bullets and saving lives, and I used to wonder if it was true. I know it's true now, for I have seen several cases of that kind. There are so many narrow escapes, bullets hitting the end of a helmet or edging off one's coat sleeve.

Mama, when you and Aunt Anna used to sit in the grandstand at a Mercer-University of Georgia game and watch your boys play ball against each other, you never dreamed that soon they would be fighting together as hard as we used to fight for our Alma Mater against each other. William was on one side of the river and I was on the other, during the advance. Love to all.

FRANK."

In a couple of days our entire division was relieved and we were marched back a few miles and were billeted on a steep mountain, near the town of Marbache.

Almost everybody had gotten a little gas and it

was telling on us. We felt tired and weak. My Gas Sergeant made a number of tests for gas, as I did, and he got so much gas during these tests that I sent him to the hospital. We did not know where we would go next. While there I wrote the following letter:

"France, Sept. 18, 1918.

Dearest Papa and Mama:

Now we are back of the lines, far enough back not to hear the guns firing. God spared me through three days of fighting. My nerves held up very well and I stood the strain fine. I just happened not to be where the shells would burst. Often they would burst at the place just where I left. I wish you could hear us get together and tell each other about it.

One of our Lieutenants had one of the most remarkable experiences I've ever heard or read about. A shrapnel shell burst overhead and killed a wounded member of his platoon that he held in his arms. He then sent two of his men a few yards to the side to observe and they were immediately killed by shell fire. A Lieutenant-Colonel was then wounded near him. He carried the Colonel back to the dressing station where he died in a little while. These are a few of the things that this Lieutenant experienced. He said he was hoping during this experience that a shell would hit him, but he came out untouched.

(NOTE:—The Lieutenant referred to in this letter is Lieutenant Luther H. Waller of Montgomery, Alabama. He was wounded later, October 9, in the Argonne Forest and was cited in Division Orders for bravery. The Lieutenant-Colonel mentioned in the letter was Colonel Emory J. Pike, Division Machine Gun Officer. The Congressional Medal of Honor was posthumously awarded him.)

I don't know where we will go from here, and if I did I would not be permitted by the censor to tell you. I am going to cable you tomorrow as I know you are anxious about me. We wore our masks four hours when they shelled the town we captured. Colonel Wetherill and Major Buxton and lots of others complimented me very highly on my work as Gas Officer. I got nearly as many compliments as I did when I got the three base hit in 1914 that won the Georgia-Tech game. I feel much prouder of this, because then I saved the game, but this time I had the responsibility of more than 4,000 men (others beside our battalion) and many told me, especially the Battalion Doctor, that I saved many casualties. My platoon had very few casualties but lots of others lost over half.

What do you think of the Austrian peace move? We don't think much of it, as no doubt Germany is behind it. Peace talk makes us fight harder. I would feel mighty bad if peace would be declared before we reached Germany, and I have no doubt that it is only a question of a short while before we'll show Germany a picture of some of their villages changed like the picturesque French villages into piles of broken walls and smashed furniture and all the other comforts of home life in utter ruin. Love to all.

FRANK."

A LONG RIDE

On the morning of September 24, I saw one of the prettiest sights of my life. We marched out several miles to board trucks for the Argonne Forest. The entire division was to be moved over a hundred miles in trucks. As we marched to the top of a hill, I looked as far as I could see over hills where these trucks had lined up waiting for us. It reminded me of the last scene in "Polly of the Circus" when the circus is moving away over the hills.

Most of us had to stand up all the way. Thanks for the good military roads in France. Standing up a hundred miles in a truck on some of our bumpy roads would be enough to put one in the hospital.

We had gone about twenty kilometers when we came to a truck which had turned over in a ditch while rounding a curve. They waved us down. A few boys from the overturned truck got in with us; others waited to get in the trucks behind us. The injured were put in the truck in front of us and in a couple of minutes we were off as if nothing had happened. Quite a happening in peace time—a small matter in time of war.

On we rode, over a hundred miles, truck after truck with hundreds of motors humming, passing through village after village, up hill and down hill, carrying

thousands of boys in khaki to their resting place in the Argonne.

Military roads saved France. It saved her back in the early days of the war when thousands of taxicabs, touring cars and trucks lined the good road from Bar Le Duc to Verdun, and the French jumping out of their vehicles on the run, rushed against the flower of Kaiser Wilhelm's trained forces, piling German on German, blocking the break through their lines in the attempted "round about way" to Paris. "They shall not pass," was the cry of these courageous sons of France; they did not pass. They would have passed if years before this time France had not built the good road from Bar Le Duc to Verdun, because the French soldiers would not have been there to stop the onrushing Germans.

There were many other times and places that these good roads saved the day for France. Let us hope that our Government will profit by this example. Our country has the most wonderful network of railroad systems in the world today, but one shell can block transportation by rail. It takes more time to repair a railroad than a dirt or concrete road.

That afternoon about 3:00 o'clock our truck stopped in the city of Bar Le Duc. This was a lively little city. Here we got out and bought all the fruit we could eat. Every fruit stand gleamed with large

juicy bunches of white grapes. I cannot remember when the French did not have delicious grapes for sale in their towns. Here I remember seeing our Commanding Officer, General Burnham, who stopped a while in the city on his way to his new headquarters.

THE ARGONNE FOREST

We went into the southern edge of the Argonne Forest on the night of September 26. For days and nights we listened to the guns along the front. Late every afternoon a truck would bring from Bar Le Duc the Paris dailies printed in English and we read of the drive that extended from the North Sea to Switzerland. We did not know when we would go up to do our part. Our division was Army Reserve and attached to the First Army Corps.

We did very little drilling and training during our waiting. Our General did not know what minute we would be ordered into the fight so we were kept ready to go in at any time. The men of Company "H" had comfortable barracks just off the road in the woods, but the men of the other companies slept in little "pup" tents on muddy ground on the side of the road.

There were a number of small one-room wooden huts on the side of a hill. Lieutenant Junius Emer-

son, the battalion dentist, and I had a hut together. We had a nice little stove in the hut and plenty of wood to keep off the October chill. I had a supply of good cigars at this time, plenty of candles and we spent the nights enjoying smoking, reading the Paris dailies, writing letters and talking. The thundering artillery barrage that we would hear at night, we would read about two nights later in our little hut.

M. Jouffrett, our interpreter, would often give me the advance news about the movement of our division, usually getting his information from the French Mission attached to our divisional headquarters. While we were camped here in the edge of the Argonne Forest I remember Mr. Jouffret said to me:

"Mr. Holden, I have some news."

"What is it, Mr. Jouffrett?" I said.

"It is zis, ze 82nd Division will never go into ze big drive, unless zey cannot do wizout us."

"Why not?" I asked.

"It is because ze 82nd Division has so much of ze foreign blood in zem."

The old interpreter missed his guess this time, or the French Mission misinformed him. A few days after that our division that had, as the interpreter said, foreign blood flowing through the veins of many of its men, played a most important part in the drive

(U. S. Official)

and stayed in action longer without a rest than any other division of the A. E. F. Not only that, but a few days from that time a sergeant from our division distinguished himself so as to be acclaimed by Marshal Foch as the greatest hero of the World War. Sergeant Alvin York, of Pall Mall, Tenn., killed twenty Germans and took one hundred and thirty-two prisoners and I am proud of the fact that he was a member of my battalion and was officered by a man (Captain E. C. B. Danforth, Jr.) from my former home town, Augusta, Ga.

On October 3rd, we moved forward toward the fighting, marching past the "jumping off point" where the drive started, across the once No Man's Land. The No Man's Land that we had known was a large tract of land, a few shell holes here and there and almost covered with French daisies, but this No Man's Land was quite different. Here the French and the German trenches in some places had been only a few yards apart and they had engaged in the most terrible kind of fighting, such as tunneling under their opponents' trenches and laying mines to be set off unexpectedly. It was a sight one would have to see to really comprehend how fearful and dreadful it appeared.

There are many pictures taken of these horrible sights but none of them give an adequate idea of the

original. This No Man's Land was once a thick forest but now had no signs of life—trees standing here and there, a few having scarred limbs, the majority no limbs at all, some having a little bark left, others cut in two by a direct shell hit, and the ground having been upturned over and over again by shells of all kinds and sizes.

We marched out of this desert of destruction into the territory recently held by the Germans. At every cross roads were large German signs. I saw numbers of German graves and they were neatly kept. There was a little wooden lattice fence around many of the graves I saw and iron crosses on some of the tombstones.

That night we stopped on a little hillside and camped until the night of October 6th, when we marched up into the drive.

THE SERMON ON THE HILLSIDE

Sunday morning, October the 6th, 1918, Lieutenant Daniel S. Smart of Cambridge, N. Y., our Chaplain, and I were sitting together on a bench in front of an old German dugout that we had slept in the previous night. There are many incidents of my overseas experience that I will forget, but the one that I am telling about now will never pass out of my memory.

We were in the Argonne Forest, just a little southeast of Varennes. That Sunday morning the sun was shining as bright and pretty as it ever did and the mild October breeze was sprinkling our little hillside with brown, yellow leaves from the trees around us. We expected any minute to go forward into the drive. The Chaplain did not have to announce that he was going to preach that morning. As we sat there talking, our conversation drifted to the "folks at home," and he showed me some kodak pictures of his father and mother taken in a rocking chair on their front porch. As we talked the boys would pass by and ask the Chaplain what time he was going to hold services. "At ten o'clock, just up there on the hillside," he would say.

At ten o'clock the little hillside was covered with boys. The Chaplain took from his pocket his trench Bible and read the fourth chapter of Paul's second letter to Timothy, and he took for his text the seventh verse: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Sitting there on the ground that the Germans occupied a few days before, I listened to Lieutenant Smart make remarks as touching as any to which I have ever listened. He was preaching next to the last sermon he ever preached to many boys who listened to the last sermon they ever heard on this earth, for

that night we marched into the fight and some of the boys who sat there on the hillside that Sunday morning died for America before the sun went down the next day, and a few days afterwards our Chaplain lost his life, too, while seeing about the remains of some of his men who had fallen.

How often have I thought about that sermon on the hillside in the Argonne that Sunday morning. How appropriate it was for Lieutenant Smart to have preached the sermon he did to so many who were listening to their last sermon—he could not have chosen a more beautiful text and his words could not have been more beautifully spoken. He did fight a good fight, and he kept the faith and eight days after this sermon he finished his course.

How fitting Paul's letter was for the Scripture reading. These are a few of the verses we heard that morning just a little way back of the place where so many were making the supreme sacrifice and to which we were to march that night:

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

ON THE ROADS

That afternoon (October 6th) we received our orders to prepare to move up toward the fighting. About dark, Captain Tillman, Acting Major of the 2nd Battalion, told me to report to the supply company and take charge of a supply train of ammunition and food and to bring my train directly behind his battalion. The supply company was a few hundred yards away. I was given a horse to ride and four wagons called "British limbers," filled with food and ammunition, and four men from the supply company were assigned to the transport—a man for each horse and wagon.

I lined my combat train behind our battalion and about 10 o'clock we started our march. The night was very dark and it began to rain. The road on which we marched was the only one leading to the front for many miles around. We seemed to make good progress until we arrived at Varennes where another road came into the one we had to travel and the traffic there began to thicken. We met outfits which had been relieved coming back from the front. Messengers on motorcycles would rush by. We marched a while, then stopped a while. Military

Police would yell: "Hold up there! move to right of road; make room for an ambulance to pass!" Remember, there was total darkness. A match struck or any light at all would have meant ruination for us. If the Germans had shelled the road we were on that night (they were good on hitting the middle of the road) it would have taken a long time for one to have counted the number of our dead and wounded. Broadway and Fifth Avenue were never more crowded. The confusion, congestion, jam and push cannot be fully described. The skill with which truck, motorcycle, and ambulance drivers made their way through the darkness over the front line roads was remarkable. Lieutenant John H. Bocock of Richmond, Va., (who was cited for bravery in action) formerly of Athens, Ga., gave an excellent idea of such a condition in the History which he wrote of his outfit (Section 539, U. S. Army Ambulance Service, with the French Army), when he said: "At night the darkness was intense, and the drivers *had literally to feel their way.*"

When I would come to a fork in the roads I did not know which way to go. Fortunately an M. P. was stationed at every cross roads and they directed me to the road the 328th Infantry men were taking. My battalion was marching in columns of twos and

they could march off the roads and around some of the jam. Hence, they were a little ahead of me.

Nearer and nearer the front we slowly moved along the road and just as day was breaking and the sun spread it first dim rays and we could barely see the country around us, I looked on the left side of the road and there I saw for the first time in my life a dead soldier on the battlefield—a German soldier with his rifle lying by his side.

During my childhood days long before I learned to read, I used to sit and listen to war stories and was told of the battles and of men being killed, and later on I studied about wars that had made history and nations, but now I had lived to see for myself a dead form lying on the battlefield; a soldier of the great military machine of Kaiser Wilhelm, having paid his all as two million of his comrades had done, for the ambitious ruler, who told Ambassador James W. Gerard: "Where Alexander and Napoleon failed, I have dreamed of world dominion." We moved forward, carrying our ammunition to be used in bringing other German soldiers just ahead of us to their last.

I passed Lieutenant Sam Proctor of Macon, Ga. He was also riding a horse. I immediately thought of the three hundred francs I borrowed from him when we were together in Paris. I had with me a lit-

tle over this amount, so I handed him three one hundred franc notes. But he insisted that this was no time to be talking about francs. I told him I was going a little further than he that morning (Sam was in the artillery) and I might be killed or captured and I wanted him to take the francs. Thus the money I borrowed in gay Paris was paid in the Argonne when we could hardly hold our horses still because of the shelling nearby.

After paying the debt we moved on slowly. About one hundred yards from there, at a fork in the road, my horse became badly frightened at the sight of dead Germans and horses killed by our artillery. The horses and Germans were terribly mutilated. Every time after that my horse would shy at the dead.

We moved on a little further until we came to a little valley and I led the combat train off the right side of the road, where we found most of our battalion in a long gully. I can see General Lindsey now, a tall figure, mingling here and there with his men in the little gully. He had his headquarters in a little tin covered hut which we called an elephant's back. The Germans made them. I do not know what they called them. They were little tin-roofed huts, used by the Germans to shelter their reserve supply of ammunition.

IN THE LITTLE VALLEY

The first thing I noticed in the little valley after we hid our combat wagons behind some bushes, was a number of German prisoners. There were very few young faces among the prisoners; most of them were old, war-weary and war-sick. Some really seemed too old to fight and I cannot understand how they endured the hardships of war. Most of them were smiling. I noticed particularly one old man smoking a long curved pipe, looking as though he had borne and suffered about all he could, yet he seemed to have a contented look, probably because he now felt that after four years of war which he had at last withstood he would get back to his home some day "somewhere in Germany." The prisoners were not kept at brigade headquarters very long but were sent on to the rear and I watched them as they marched away down the road. A few shells were dropping in the fields nearby and I know some of them were thinking that their own artillery might kill them just as they were about to escape from four long years of war. In a few minutes a German plane circled over us rather low and one of our men began firing on the plane with a German machine gun that had been captured.

Captain Tillman ordered me to issue our men extra

ammunition. I established an ammunition pile and sat on it and issued the ammunition as the men would come up. Then the German shells began to burst around us. Their artillery would mix in a German 77 with an Austrian 88. The Austrian 88 would not whistle until it was just about to burst but the whistling 77 could be heard a long time while it was coming over.

I saw a shell hit in a squad of men about fifteen yards from me, just across the ditch, and I heard a few groans; I saw our stretcher bearers immediately run and get the wounded and bring them to the first aid station near me; I saw our doctors dress the wounds; I saw a first aid man spread a blanket over one who had gone to a better world—these things I saw while I issued extra ammunition to the men while the German artillery was peppering the little valley with shells. That isn't all I saw. I saw Lieutenant Barker, our Red Cross man, giving cigarettes and chocolate to the wounded as they came walking back from the fighting a little way ahead of us and to those that were being wounded around and near us. He had a leather satchel slung over his shoulders filled with cigarettes and chocolate. He was the busiest man I saw. He utterly disregarded enemy fire and his own safety at all times to do his duty.

When I finished issuing the ammunition it was

about three o'clock in the afternoon (Monday.) I had not closed my eyes in sleep since Saturday night, nor had I eaten anything since supper the night before. I was on the roads all night the previous night, as you have just read, and I had seen many horrors of war. While sitting on the ammunition pile, shells dropped all around me.

When I had issued ammunition to the last man I started up a little path and passed Lieutenant Barker. I told him I was awfully tired and terribly hungry. He said that he had frequently noticed me as I was sitting on the ammunition pile while the shells were bursting nearby and he had plenty of chocolate and wanted me to take a piece. I did. I had not slept or had anything to eat in a long time and had been under a terriffic shell fire and a terrible strain, expecting death at any moment. How hungry, weak and tired I was, and that chocolate tasted so good! But that isn't all; it probably saved my life. As I stood there eating the chocolate and talking to Lieutenant Barker, a shell burst squarely in the path up which I had started walking. I would have been just about where it hit when it burst if I had not stopped and asked for the chocolate.

Then a boy came up, who had been shot through the wrist, and said: "I got the man that shot me." Mr. Barker put a cigarette in his mouth and lit it

for him, as the drops of blood from the boy's wrist stained the soil of France.

Then a shell hit several yards away, a piece of the shell cutting a deep gash in a horse's leg.

After I got the chocolate there was more shelling than ever. I ran behind a tank that had been hit and was out of commission. I stayed behind this tank a while, then I went into the gully where Acting Major J. M. Tillman, Lieutenant Joe Wood, most of our battalion runners, and others were. I remember there were some roots near me and I pushed my head up under them as far as I could. A shell hit just outside the gully and threw dirt in on us. The dirt and grit made a tinkling noise as it fell on our steel helmets. This made us cling closer to the side and bottom of the gully. About that time a runner reported to Lieutenant Wood. We had relay runners stationed up the road so as to send messages back and forth. Two of our runners were stationed together on the roadside.

"Did you deliver the message?" asked Lieutenant Wood.

"No, sir," answered the runner.

"Why not?"

The runner swallowed a big lump in his throat and said, "A shell hit where they were and both were dead when I got to them."

There were many songs written and many speeches made about the boys rushing into the fight smiling, joking and laughing, and sometimes this was true, but when the shells were bursting around us as we hugged the bottom of that little gully, I looked around and there were stern and serious looks on the faces I saw.

After the shelling I went over to one of the elephant backs which was being used for a first aid station, and there I heard a familiar voice of one who seemed to be suffering. It was Lieutenant Walter A. Little of Forsyth, Ga. I asked him if he was hurt much. He raised his head and looked at me to see who I was and said, "Hello, Holden. Well, they got me." You can better imagine than I can describe the feeling I had and choked back as I looked at him for the last time and when he said, "Well, they got me." He said something else, but I have forgotten the exact words he used. A piece of shrapnel had buried itself in his back. He, Lieutenant Samuel Jamerson and Lieutenant Wm. K. Merritt were wounded while bringing some prisoners down the nearby road. Lieutenant Jamerson told me later that he could see the German artillery and machine gunners shooting point blank at them from a nearby hill. He said when he was hit he fell in a ditch and that a number of the prisoners were killed and wounded and that one pris-

oner was cut in two. The wounded prisoners, he said, came over in the ditch with him.

Lieutenant Little died a few days later in Base Hospital No. 49 at Beauns, France, just two beds from where Lieutenant Ernest Hollingsworth, a friend and fellow townsman of mine, was recovering from a machine gun wound he received while serving with the 38th Infantry, the outfit that helped check the last drive the Germans attempted on Paris.

When I returned home Earnest told me what a brave fight for life Lieutenant Little made. It was in this hospital and about the same time Little died that Lieutenant Frank Carter, of Atlanta, Ga., after spilling his blood for his country in the Argonne Forest, gave up more blood for a wounded soldier, which proved to be a greater danger to Carter's life than the German bullet that went through his right shoulder.

I went back to the little gully. It was about dark then. Captain Tillman had just received orders to move his battalion further up. He started out with his men and said to me: "Go back, Holden, and bring us some ammunition and food."

Just before I left, Lieutenant Lyons Joel asked me to keep his trench coat. From the way he told me good-bye, he seemed to think he would never get home. I remember how lonesome I felt when I was

transferred to the 2nd Battalion, 328th Infantry. They had trained together many months; they seemed like one big family; and at first I felt like a stranger among them. But I didn't feel that way long, because in my company was Lieutenant Lyons Joel of Atlanta, Ga. We were in college together. It was not long before, by his courteous treatment, I felt a part of the 2nd Battalion. Lieutenant Joel and I were together so often while in France. His men fairly worshipped him. He never lost an opportunity to serve his platoon and when arriving at a new area, he never thought of a place to sleep for himself until his platoon had been provided for. No one talked more about the home folks than he did. Volunteering when he was below the draft age, he answered his country's call—brave, loyal and faithful, he died like a hero. A few days after he threw his coat to me to hold on October 14th, he received a wound that proved fatal. You may remember now in the first of the book I told of Joel's mother and father following him to Camp Upton to say a last good-bye to their only son. I am so glad now that they did. If he had lingered a little longer in the hospital in France after he was wounded he would have seen his father and mother once more, because they had secured passports to go over before they heard the news of his death.

Joel was one of those whose people, as a race, have no home country; but Jews fought with every country in the World War. Over 600 American Jews were cited for bravery in action and it is thrilling to read the citations of Sergeant Sidney G. Gumpertz; Sergeant Benjamin Kaufman and William Sawelson who were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

ON THE ROADS AGAIN

About dark I got my men together and started back with our wagons to get more ammunition and food. The road was not so crowded and jammed as it was the night before. Shelling slowed our progress for the first mile.

We arrived at the supply company after midnight, cold, tired and hungry. We unhitched our horses, fed them, and got a cup of coffee and something to eat. Then I went to the supply company's tent and slept for a few hours on Lieutenant Little's cot. As tired as I was it was some time before I could go to sleep. In my thoughts, I had before me a picture of Little as he lay fatally wounded in the dressing station that afternoon.

Early the next morning we filled our wagons with ammunition and hard bread, corned beef and jam, and started back to the front. Our front lines had ad-

vanced far enough for us to make most of the way up in day time. After we passed Varennes we began to hear the whistling of the shells again. We were on a road that followed up the valley, twisting and turning alongside the Aire river. A few miles north of Varennes was another road which ran into ours and on the hillside to our right we could see quite a bit of it. A column of infantry soldiers were marching on this road and all at once the shells came whistling overhead and dropping on and near it. The infantry column scattered to the fields on both sides of the road. Then I saw an ambulance making its way back from the front. It was running fast. Shells were bursting in front of and behind the car. Then I saw an awful sight—a shell made a direct hit on the ambulance.

In a few minutes the shelling shifted to our road and the shells began to fall around us. One shell burst by one of my combat wagons and I went to see what damage it had done. Several pieces of shrapnel hit the wagon. The driver, Bloomer, was a complete wreck. He was not touched by the shell, but had lost his mind entirely. He did not even remember his name. The bursting of the shell had made him a shell-shocked patient. I sent him back to the hospital and the rest of us went to nearby dugouts. Claude L. Sheats of Kansas City was standing

near Bloomer when the shell exploded, but he was not harmed.

After the shelling ceased near us we went on further until we came to cross roads. A military policeman threw up his right hand and stopped us. He would not let us go further as the road just ahead of us was being heavily shelled. I led the transport back a few hundred yards and then off of the road behind some camouflage and there we watched the shelling.

Just ahead of us and to the right was a little valley where an outfit of artillery was stationed. I saw four or five German planes circle over this valley, then they flew back over their lines and I suppose signaled their artillery to shell the valley, as they stopped shelling the roads and began to shell this valley. In about twenty minutes the shelling ceased and the ambulances began bringing out the wounded.

I have oftentimes seen thousands of madly cheering football fans suddenly quieted. The game stops, "time out" is called. A player is hurt. The referee signals for the doctor. He rushes over the field with his medicine case. Thousands are watching the wounded player as he lies on the gridiron. Everything is dead still. Substitutes dart out from the sidelines and carry the player off the field. As they pass

the bleachers and grandstands the stillness is broken by handclaps of sympathy—and the game goes on.

I watched the wounded boys as they passed me that afternoon, some limping, some holding a torn or broken arm and others whose uniform was being stained in many places by their fresh warm blood, but there was no one to give them a cheer, nor did the game stop for "time out." It could not be otherwise, for the game being played was WAR—different from all other contests—the game of war must go on.

We started out on the road again and passed the little valley that we had just seen shelled. I saw many of our fine artillery horses lying dead on the ground.

We soon reached the place where Captain Tillman had ordered us back for food. General Lindsey was out in the middle of the road and as I rode by him he stopped me and asked where I was going. I told him I had ammunition and food for my battalion. Then he said, "They are shelling the road just ahead. Pull your wagons in to the right and wait until dark. You are under enemy observation on the road. They are shelling just ahead." I turned in to the right and waited until dark and then started out again.

I led my wagons on. Looking down just ahead of

my slow-walking horse, I saw a khaki clad form lying in the middle of the road. I stopped and directed the transport to go on the side of the road so as not to run over the body. As the wagons drove by, and as I sat there on my horse looking for the first time at a dead soldier boy of my country my thoughts traveled many miles back across the seas to a home. My thoughts were that someone was probably writing to him, maybe knitting something to keep him warm, or perhaps just sitting by the fireside thinking of the brave boy and his return. I shall never forget that moment. I kept looking at him; with his face to the ground, his helmet still on his head, he appeared as though he had just stumbled and fallen. There he lay—an American soldier, representing the Stars and Stripes, whose followers love peace but can fight when it's time to fight with a courage that fears no danger.

Wars seem to stand out in the pages of history as milestones in the paths of the lives of nations. Names of a few Generals, with important dates and battles, are recorded and ever remembered, but the long roll of others who shed their blood and gave all are only thought of in the course of time, as a part of one big army. But I wish to say to the mother and father whose boy fell in battle on the soil of northern France or otherwise died in the service that I

know you have watched him year after year and planned and dreamed of his future and that you miss him; but remember that the Great Architect of the Universe has plans that we sometimes cannot understand. From their deeds future generations will reap the benefits. If all could accomplish in our short span of life what the American boys accomplished, some of whom gave their all in the World War, then surely this old world would soon be a better place in which to live and die. But I must go on with my story.

We moved on and I saw more Americans along the roadside whose tasks had been finished, mostly boys from my battalion and brigade headquarters' runners. Finally we arrived at a place where the wagons could go no further. The bridge across the Aire at La Forge had been shelled away. I called one of the boys who was with me and he and I crossed the river on the fallen pieces of the bridge and at times had to make some big jumps to make connection on the fragments and rubbish in the river. We walked on a few hundred yards and came to the town of Chatel Chehery.

It was very dark then, about eleven o'clock. Not a sound did we hear nor a soul did we see as we walked up a side street into the main part of the village. Finally we heard someone walking. He was about

fifty yards in front of us. I decided to follow him. We followed him a little way, then watched him go into a house. We came to the house and everything was dark, but we could hear voices. There was a blanket hanging in the hallway. We passed this blanket and then saw a faint light down some steep steps. We went down these steps and then turned to the left and went down another flight of steps and walked inside a large cellar. The cellar was full of our wounded boys. It was our regimental dressing station. Lieutenant Emerson grabbed my hand as if he was mighty glad to see me. He said he had been thinking about me that night, and wondered if I was still living. He was our battalion dentist, but was helping Captain Davis Goldstein and our other doctors in their first aid work. Over in the corner was Lieutenant Albert G. Teague from Birmingham, Ala. He had been badly gassed—he looked "all in." Lying on the floor was a wounded German asleep; his wounds had just been dressed. Our doctors were busy dressing the wounds of many others.

I told them I had food and ammunition that I was carrying to our front lines and asked them how far they had advanced. They told me that regimental headquarters was in the northern edge of the village and that I could get the information there. We left the infirmary and started our search for regimental

headquarters. While walking through the village we met several boys coming toward us. I asked them where the headquarters was located. They told us to go up past the village church, turn to the left and we would find it in the last house on the left hand side of the street.

When we arrived at headquarters, I met Lieutenant William T. Swanson of Savannah, Ga., also going in to see Colonel Wetherill. He said he had just left his platoon out on the hill and that many were shot to pieces and were calling him by name and asking him to do something for them.

I went inside. Captain Tomasello of Bagdad, Fla., Regimental Operations Officer, was busy talking over a phone that the Signal Corps men had installed. Colonel Wetherill was sitting in a corner bent over a table, studying his map by the dim light of a flickering candle. I told Colonel Wetherill that my transport was at La Forge but the bridge was down and that we could not cross. He said I could not get further than Chatel Chehery anyway, as daylight would catch my wagons on the road under enemy observation. He looked down at his map and looked up and said I could go back to Apremont and cross the river and come into Chatel Chehery on the left side of the river.

"All right, sir," I said, and we started back to

La Forge. Going back to the wagons, I detected that the little river bottom was filled with gas. In crossing it I got some gas. We put on our gas masks but at times the way was so rough and the night so dark that we had to take off our masks occasionally; especially when we crossed the river on the fallen rocks.

When I got back to my transport, I told my men the route we had to take to get into Chatel Chehery and about that time Captain Cathings Therrel of Atlanta, Ga., from division headquarters, interrupted me and said that he was establishing a divisional ammunition and food dump there at La Forge. I told him Colonel Wetherill had just mapped out a way for me to get the food and ammunition into Chatel Chehery. Captain Therrel said that his orders were from divisional headquarters, and that he would take charge and establish the divisional dump. He told me to carry my men and horses back to the supply company.

Captain Therrel had charge of our supply company when we first went into the Toul sector and his efficient management was a source of much pride and admiration to General Lindsey.

THE ROADS ONCE MORE

Again we hit the trail of the shelled roads. It was about 2:00 A. M. when we started back. It was cold,

raining, and very dark. When we came to the cross roads, I decided to take a nearer road to the supply company and as it happened was very unlucky in doing so because about three miles from there we met a French outfit going toward the front. Here we got into an awful jam again. I was so tired that I almost fell asleep on my horse at times when we had to stop awhile because of the roads being blocked. Only once or twice did I hear the French soldiers say anything as the rain-soaked blue columns tramped by. The newness of war with them had worn into a serious affair during the four years past.

When we arrived at the supply company we unhitched our horses and I went to the supply company tent. I found it filled with replacement officers who had just come up to fill the vacant files. I managed to squeeze in on the cold ground and slept for a few hours.

About daybreak everyone left the tent but me. I tried to get up but could not. I had such a pain in my head and chest and was suffering so that I was unable to get up with the others. My chest felt as though needles were sticking in it when I tried to cough. After breakfast several came in and felt my head and said I had a high fever. Among them was Lieutenant Mack Hirshburg of Atlanta, Ga., who came into the tent just before he left again for the

front with his wagons. He was in charge of ammunition and food wagons for his battalion as I was in charge of the one for our battalion. I told one of my drivers to take charge of our wagons.

About 5:00 o'clock that afternoon Charles Goodreau, from Falls River, Mass., helped me over to a nearby tent hospital.

I had to stop several times and rest before we reached the hospital. On our last stop I remember seeing a sight that I have seen many, many times since when I recall the war pictures that are stored away in memory's keeping. Just as I sat down by the roadside to rest I looked up and saw a German plane dive out of a clear sky towards one of our large observation balloons, and puncture it with bullets. The walls of the balloon closed in and a great cloud of black smoke gushed upward. Out from the little basket underneath jumped a small figure, the parachute opened up and the observer floated safely down from his destroyed post. The German airman, accomplishing his mission, ascended towards the left in a large semi-circle and headed back towards the German lines with the swiftness of an eagle.

The tent hospital to which I went was located on the edge of where the town of Varennes used to be. Here a doctor examined me, took my temperature which registered 103½ and tagged me acute bron-

chitis. I begged him not to send me back to the rear but my pleadings did no good. Then I insisted that I would not take a wounded man's place in the ambulance.

I lay down inside the tent. Ambulances and trucks would come up to get the wounded and sick but I waited for about an hour and a half before I would let them put me in a truck. Yet I wished I had been wounded because most of them were only slightly wounded and were not suffering much; they were laughing and joking.

Goodreau was the orderly for Lieutenant Smart (our Chaplain) and myself, but I had been using him as a driver on the wagon of the boy, (Bloomer), I lost by shell shock. I told Goodreau that he had done all he could for me and to go back to the Chaplain and help him bury the dead as he probably needed him now. His eyes filled with tears as he told me good-bye.

After he left I seemed to have gotten worse. A few shells dropped near the tent and I thought we were in for a shelling but only a few hit near us.

Just outside the tent a man began singing "Mother McCrea." I was already thinking of my mother before he began singing because I thought I was dying, and you know whom we want by our side when we feel that we are about to leave this world. And she

no doubt was thinking and praying for me, because as Frank L. Stanton wrote:

"There's a woman a-dreaming when shadows fall drear—
Dreams of a boy Over There;
And there's light in the dream, and that Light is a prayer
Of Love for a boy Over There.
And the dream and the prayer find their way o'er the foam."

Very few ever have the experience of feeling that they are dying and live to tell it. Many are cut off from this world in a second's time and are never conscious of the fact that they are leaving.

I know now how the boys felt so far away from home who were conscious before they died and felt that they were dying.

About 8:00 o'clock that night I was put in a truck and carried to a field hospital further back of the lines. Here I took off my clothes and shoes which were still wet from the rains of the night before and I slept till morning on a cot near the stove.

The next morning after taking a lot of medicine, I was taken out with a truck load of wounded and sick to a station where a French hospital train was waiting to take us to Langres. I was put in a lower bed on this train. The boy above me had to lie

on his face as he had a bad wound in his back. We rode all night. The next morning when we arrived ambulances were waiting for us at the station and about 10:00 o'clock I was lying between white sheets in a ward in Base Hospital 53.

THE LAST SHOTS

I wanted to go back to the front and every day I would ask the nurse and doctors to let me go back to my division but they refused, because the thermometer showed I had fever. In about a week the fever left me and on October 22nd, I left the hospital with orders to report to Is-sur-Tille where I would get my traveling orders. Here I spent the night in a Red Cross Hotel. It was a cold, windy night. After supper I went into the parlor and sat in a big soft rocking chair in front of a glowing fire. An American girl was playing the piano and two were standing by her, singing. After a bit they sang my favorite song, "The Sunshine of Your Smile." We all had some one dear to us back in the States that we often thought about. I saw a pen and ink on the table and in one of my sentimental moods I wrote *her* a long letter. But I am dreaming now, so will pinch myself and go on with my story.

I was ordered to the First Army Replacement Depot which was stationed south of Nancy. When I re-

ported the Depot was moving into the southern edge of the Argonne Forest, and I moved up with them. Captain I. Kimball of Auburn, Alabama, was in charge of the Medical Department of the Depot. He saw that I had gotten out of the hospital too soon and was still very weak. I could not walk a hundred yards without having to stop and rest, so Captain Kimball had me assigned to the Replacement Depot until I could get stronger. The Depot was attached to the 40th Division. After we entered the Argonne, I tried to get transferred back to the 82nd Division but was told that it would take a G. H. Q. order to transfer me from one division to another. I did get back as far as the southern part of the Argonne. My division had been relieved then and was stationed nearby. Many of the boys of my old battalion told me how thin, weak and bad I looked.

While here in the edge of the Argonne Forest, I heard the last great artillery barrage on the morning of November 11th, that ended the World War. Promptly at 11:00 o'clock that morning the war noise of four years was hushed into sweet silence of peace. It was so hard for us to realize the end had come. It all seemed like a dream.

Hot guns began to cool. The last bullet had pierced its object; the last shell had wrought its havoc; the last bombing plane had haunted its prey.

Thus the curtain fell, bringing to a close the greatest catastrophe of all time.

That last morning of the fight many of our boys were killed during the fierce exchange of artillery fire and that calm afternoon buried by chaplains and comrades undisturbed by the noises of war.

I wonder if humanity will ever have to bear again the sorrows of another big war. The loss of life in the World War was appalling; the number of killed and wounded ran into the millions; and the number of heart-aches into billions. The permanent waste of property is too enormous to calculate and the debts piled upon nations make figures that are staggering. The terrible after effects are not only still seen but will be seen for many, many years. What would be the grand totals that would flow from another big war fought from under the waves and above the earth?

Look at your innocent baby. Some day his soft and tender flesh may be ripped by an ugly piece of shrapnel shell; his little sparkling eyes may be blinded by some poisonous gas; or his nerves may be shattered and torn by horrors of war that we are yet to hear about. But you say there will never be another war. Probably that is what mothers and fathers thought twenty and thirty years ago when so many of our war-crippled and blind were babes.

Let us do what we can to prevent wars. Let's have some kind of world court, call it what you will. It will lessen if not prevent future wars. As it would be an experiment and its operations would be so varied and of such magnitude its powers should be limited at first, and enlarged as might be justified by experience.

Something must be done with the nations that are teeming over with millions. They must expand. Where is this overflow going? However much they wish to inhabit American soil we do not want indiscriminate immigration. Let the court select a country for the overflow, a country that will best satisfy all concerned. This will help to remove one cause of war. This court could also in some systematic way relieve famine, a great rival of war in producing suffering and taking life.

What I have written may be trite and commonplace and indeed out of place and serve no purpose except to make me feel better for having said something about prevention or lessening of war, the horrible and horrifying effects of which I have seen and felt.

From the organization of soldiers of the World War in this and other countries may come a good substitute for a world court. Out of the war was born the American Legion, destined to be one of the great-

(U. S. Official)

est non-political organizations in the United States. The soldiers of the World War in this country have associated themselves together for "God and Country" and I feel sure that we will have done more good than the World War did harm after we have worked for half a century and when we are gone our children will take up and carry on the good work for America.

During the State Convention of the American Legion held at Columbus, Georgia, July 4th, 5th and 6th, 1921, one of the prominent speakers said to us in a speech before the convention:

"As a military man I abhor war and I believe I state only what is absolute truth when I say that no class of men realize the horrors of armed conflict more vividly than the so-called 'professional soldiers.'

We have not only suffered the hardships and experienced the dangers of battle but many of us have had our homes forever darkened through the loss of our sons during the war. The only son of the late Chief of Staff, General March, went down in an airship; the only son of General Cameron, at one time in command of Camp Gordon, was killed in France; and the only son of Colonel Symmonds, now Chief of Staff of the Fourth Corps area, in Atlanta, died of wounds received in action. My own son fell while personally operating a German machine gun which he, with a small detachment in advance of the remainder of his company, had just captured from the

enemy. We are, gentlemen, but human beings. Is it probable that after such experiences we could advocate war? On the contrary, we are advocating measures which history has shown will prevent war."

This speaker was General P. C. Harris, at that time Adjutant General of our army.

ANXIOUS HEARTS

The day after the Armistice was signed I read in the European edition of the New York Herald these glowing headlines, "THE WAR IS WON." Then I read how whistles blew and bells pealed forth victory throughout the world to millions of anxious hearts making them thankful and jubilant. I read how Paris celebrated as never before. But in the same edition that carried these good tidings was a column headed, "LATEST AMERICAN CASUALTIES." Two hundred and thirty-six names of officers and men who were killed in action or who died of disease were listed with home addresses in every state in the Union.

All the world was happy that peace had come, but with it there were aching hearts. Many had already learned that they would never again have their boys around the family fireside. Then, too, how many others were in doubt as to whether their boys survived the last days of fighting? My parents were among those last mentioned.

My mother paraded and waved a flag in the happy throng that marched in Athens, Georgia, when the wires flashed "Peace on Earth," and my father gazed on the parade from his office window with heart throbs of joy, but that night, what? Before they closed their eyes in sleep they wondered many times if I came through.

The next day they looked for a cable from me, but not a word. The next surely a cable would come, they thought, but not a word from me that day, nor the next, and not until seventeen days after November 11th did they know that I was living.

Soon afterwards my father received a letter from the United States Treasury Department notifying him that I died on November the 1st and requested him to fill out an enclosed form and make a certain affidavit to obtain settlement of my insurance policy. My father answered that there must be some mistake as he had received a cable from me the day before and I had put date of message in body of cable. In answer to this letter the Bureau of War Risk Insurance Office wrote:

"You are advised that upon the receipt of your letter an investigation was made which developed the fact that Frank B. Holden, 2nd Lieutenant of Infantry, United States Army, who died on November 1st or 2nd, was the son of Mr. H. Holden, Oakland, Maine. On account of the similarity of names the

form was sent to you in error, and it is hoped that it caused you no unnecessary anxiety. The prompt attention given to the matter by you and the information given this Bureau are very much appreciated.

Yours truly,
(Signed) H. C. HOULIHAN,
Deputy Commissioner Compensation."

Two years later my father received the following:

"H. M. Holden,
Athens, Ga.
My dear sir:

How little I know that these lines will ever reach you. The enclosed were among the effects of my boy sent to us from Souilly hospital where he died November 1st, 1918. My son's name was Lt. Frank B. Holden, thus the mistake. If the enclosed reaches you, I would be very glad to hear from you.

Very sincerely,
(Signed) MRS. J. H. HOLDEN."

The "enclosed" referred to in above letter was a cable sent to me from my father. It said, "All Well," and signed "H. M. Holden." I hope the other Frank Holden thought the initial "M" was a typographical error and that he died feeling all at home were well as I would have wanted to have felt if I had died over there.

I had no idea there was another boy in the army who had the same name, rank and branch of service that I had. One of the initials "H' in the name of

his father was one of the initials in the name of my father. And getting our names confused indicates there must have been many errors, for the Bureau of War Risk Insurance say they have in their files 53,200 members of the Johnston family (Johnston, Johnston's, Jonson, etc.) They have records of 2,138 John Johnstons and 2,032 who answer to the name of William Johnston. Of course you know the names that come next: 51,900 Smiths, 48,000 Browns and 47,000 Williams. The Jones, Andersons and Walkers are next in line. So mistakes were inevitable; but I never thought that I would ever read of my death.

AFTER THE STORM

Like rivers that swell after the storm, the stream of war casualties swell long after the flashing cannons have thundered forth their last rain of deadly shells. More than three years have passed since the World War closed and there are today over thirty thousand American ex-service men in hospitals, which is more than at any other time since the Armistice was signed.

Captain Henry Brown, a college mate of mine, died from the effects of war after he returned from France, and now sleeps in peace in the cemetery of his boyhood home, Athens, Georgia, where the

smoothly flowing Oconee winds through the calm city of the dead and where the birds sing in the water oaks above the marble slabs. Such a contrast from the horrors of war that took Henry's life, and to this quiet resting place his father and mother can go and retrospect and find sweet consolation.

There is Lieutenant Robert R. Forrester of Atlanta, Ga. He and I for three years drilled together while attending the Georgia Military Academy at College Park, Georgia. Robert, while serving with the 327th Infantry, volunteered on a daylight raiding party against the enemy on September the 13th, 1918, and was severely wounded. He lived many months after returning and underwent untold suffering before he died.

You know full well the story of Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Whittlesey of Pittsfield, Mass. On his chest was pinned the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest military tribute this country can pay a soldier for bravery. But as the outside world read of this hero and of the medals awarded him, they knew not the heart that beat beneath these medals; they knew not the shattered nerves that lay beneath a flesh surface that showed no visible scars of battle; they knew not that the strain of war left a mental and mortal wound. No! they knew not these things until Colonel Whittlesey's tragic death which

came three years after the Germans asked him while Commander of the "Lost Battalion" in the Argonne to surrender, which he refused to do. We all know of this tragedy, because of the prominence of the hero, but there are many similar cases that go unnoticed.

There are many others I could name. Every community knows of them. They died for our country as did the thousands who were killed in action. And there are many others who will never get over the effects of the war.

I ask your indulgence to mention another war casualty. He never wore a soldier's uniform, but when Congress declared war he was the Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy of the United States. During the days of readjustment and reconstruction our country is deprived of the services of our war time President, Woodrow Wilson. And during these trying days not only the States need Wilson, but the world needs his great heart and brain. Time proves all things and in the distant years I can see the long row of American school children memorizing important dates and names of prominent figures and battles of the World War, and standing out above and beyond all others will be, in dates, "November 11th, 1918;" in names of battles, "Argonne;" and in the names of persons, "Woodrow Wilson."

As the years go by our people will read and study this man more and monuments to his memory will tower here and there throughout this land of ours. Not listed a casualty on the records of the War Department (though by special Act of Congress he should be), yet in the hearts of his fellow countrymen his name is written alongside the names of other American soldiers wounded "in action."

A TRIP BACK

A few days after the Armistice, I secured a motorcycle side car and rode in peace over the roads that I had traveled over in the dark without any lights. I saw many places where we were shelled and the little valley where at one time I thought "the next shell will get me." But the places had already changed. The shell holes had begun leveling out.

I rode into Chatel Chehery and went back of the church into the village church yard. Here I saw the graves of some of my dearest friends and saw where five officers from my Regiment (328th) had been buried in a row. I stood before the grave of my old college pal, Lieutenant Carl Goldsmith of Atlanta, Ga. I know he must have died smiling. I never saw him when his bright face did not inspire all those around him. Major Buxton said when he saw Carl Gold-

smith's body on the morning of October 11th on a little slope beside the first houses in the town of Cornay that Carl lay full length on his stomach, but the left side of his face was resting on his left arm, his pistol gripped in his right hand thrust forward, and just back of him lay three or four of his men. Major Buxton said that Carl had the happiest and most peaceful expression he ever saw on a dead soldier.

I went back through the valley that I walked through when I went into Chatel Chehery the night the bridge was down. In this little valley were many rows of crosses marking the graves of our men. How awfully sad and depressing was the sight of these crosses and graves of my comrades. The afternoon was cold and rainy and it was a long, lonesome ride for me back to my outfit.

DAD'S XMAS LETTER

The following headlines appeared in the issue of "Stars and Stripes" the last of November, 1918:

"LID OFF CENSORSHIP FOR FATHER'S LETTER

"NEW RULING ANNOUNCED JUST IN TIME TO ALLOW FAMILY TO KNOW WHOLE STORY OF YOUR LIFE IN FRANCE"

A part of my letter is as follows:

"France, November 24, 1918.

Dear Papa:

This is your Christmas letter.

It is impossible for me to sit down and write you of the many times I have thought of you and of how I have missed you since I have been in France; so I am not going to try to do the impossible but instead I am going to tell you many things that heretofore the censor would not allow. I believe that a father's love and feeling for his son is just as deep as that of a mother's and I know of nothing that will interest you more than for you to stop figuring and guessing where I am and where I have been and now hear the real facts."

The above is the first paragraph of the long "Father's Xmas Letter" that I wrote on a chilly November night thirteen days after the Armistice was signed. The rest of the letter tells in detail every little French village in which we were billeted, where we first went into the trenches, and of the drives we made. On my return home I learned that my mother, father, brother and sisters had worn out a map and spent many hours trying to figure out what part of France I was in, especially during the drives.

What a grand success "Dad's Xmas Letter" proved to be! The Stars and Stripes said in its issue of December 6, 1918, that the homebound mail for the week prior to the one in which Father's Let-

ters were dispatched comprised 6,381,540 pieces and the homebound mail for the week in which these letters were sent Statesward numbered 8,632,000 pieces, an increase of 2,250,460 pieces. The postal authorities state that they were sure that at least 2,000,000 Fathers' Letters left France, which means that nearly every one in the A. E. F. who could write or dictate a letter did so.

But with the sunshine we always have the rain. In the above mentioned issue of the Stars and Stripes of December 6th, the following appeared:

"But the prize letter of the day, the best of all in our opinion, and we have seen and heard of many, was written down at Saizeraise, France, by a man whose name we will naturally omit. This is the way his father's Christmas Victory Letter read:

"My Father: Today throughout the Army soldiers are writing to their fathers, so I am sending a word of devotion to mine.

"I want first to tell you that I felt your presence at my side through times of strife and hardship. Your character was an inspiration to me at every turn, and, though my following was but a poor emulation, the desire to be worthy was strong.

The thought of you, your tenderness, your sympathetic nature, were constantly before me—and I could not forget.

I need not tell you where I have been and what I have done—you have been with me every moment

and you already know. I was uplifted by the thought that you were by my side.

With just as much love as though you were still in the land of the living, I am,

YOUR DEVOTED SON."

Then there was the "Vanished Hand."

Some of the fathers of these boys received letters from the pals of their departed sons who gave these fathers in many cases the first details of their brave boys' deeds.

Thanks to the Stars and Stripes for the suggestion of "Dad's Xmas Letter." This is just one of the many good things this official organ of the A. E. F. did for us over there. I hardly see how we could have gotten along without this publication. It cheered us with jokes, songs and poetry. It told of new leave areas that were being opened. It told us how Liberty Loan drives back home were going "over the top." During the dark month of July, 1918, when the Germans were only forty miles from Paris, it told us that we were landing on the average of ten thousand American soldiers per day in France. In short, the Stars and Stripes was the next best thing to getting letters from home. It cheered the army in the mud and blood of the trenches and it encouraged the men in the Service of Supply—the army behind the army.

MY BEST TRIP IN FRANCE

The morning of November 27th, Lieutenant Chas. T. Gilden, Jr., a dentist from Philadelphia and I wanted to see Verdun and the awful sights around the city. We started out walking on the road toward Verdun and we soon "flagged" a truck. The driver said he was carrying some supplies to the army of occupation, so we decided to go on as far as Luxemburg with him and then catch another truck back. We passed through the heart of the historic city of Verdun. We rode through the narrow streets lined by three and four story buildings for blocks and blocks. All of the buildings I saw either had great shell holes in them or were partly knocked down or entirely wrecked.

Beyond Verdun we passed through a long stretch of shell-ploughed country that looked like a perfect hell on earth. On and on we rode until we reached concrete dugouts, a perfect trench system and strings of camouflage stretched across the top of the road so as to conceal any movements on it from our observation balloons. Many large trees along the road were mined so that when the mines were set off the trees would fall across the road and block a pursuit.

We rode through many deserted towns. In one through which we passed I saw a theater in the cen-

ter of the town where the German soldiers were afforded amusements. On the eastern end of the town was a large prison camp.

Just about dark we came to the city of Longwy and here we found many French inhabitants. The Germans had passed through the town a few days before on their evacuation. We spent the night in Longwy and started out early the next morning for Luxemburg. When we got into the country of Luxemburg, I could see a difference. The soil had been tilled and the yards around the farm houses kept clean; the people looked well and dressed well and did not seem to have been hard pressed by the war—no shell holes in the fields, no ruined villages—everything looked prosperous and it made me forget I was so near poor Belgium and France.

We arrived in the city of Luxemburg about noon. Here was the capital of a little country which had been surrounded by nations at war. The street cars and streets were crowded. The show windows were decorated with Christmas goods.

I went into a store to buy some souvenirs to bring back with me. The people there speak French, Flemish and German and many other languages. A pretty little girl came up to wait on me and after much difficulty I managed to tell her in a few broken French words what I wanted. When I finished she

laughed (not smiled) at me and said, "What do you wish, I speak English a little bit?" Well, her English was a long way better than my French so we conversed thereafter in English.

That night we were given passes to one of the leading social clubs of the city. All of the Americans were treated royally by the inhabitants. Some day I want to go back to that little country of Luxemburg.

We found a good place to sleep in a nice residence that night. Early the next morning we walked out the street that led back into France towards our camp. We had not gone far before a truck came and we boarded it. The truck turned off from our road at Verdun. We waited a little while and then waved down another truck. We arrived at camp a little after dark. I think I enjoyed this trip more than any trip I made during my stay overseas.

The next day was Thanksgiving Day. After dinner I went to my little hut and built a fire in the stove. In a little while the room was warm and I began a long letter home telling about my trip to Verdun and Luxemburg.

I have this letter before me now as I write these lines and the last page reads:

"We had a good dinner. We had chicken instead of turkey. Also had some olives, the first I have had since I left the States. It is raining now, a cold

winter rain, but I am comfortably fixed. I have a good fire in my stove and have plenty of wood in my wood box.

I have more to be thankful for as each Thanksgiving Day rolls by, but I have more to be thankful for this Thanksgiving than all the rest put together.

Just think, next Thanksgiving, if nothing happens, I'll be at home! Oh! how happy I'll be to be back home again. I love home, but now I love it and can appreciate it more than ever before.

Continue to keep cheerful, because that great day isn't so far away now. With all my love."

The last of November our Replacement Depot was disbanded and most of us were assigned to the various regiments of the 40th Division. I was assigned to the 157th Infantry (40th Division) and stayed with this regiment until we landed in New York.

CHRISTMAS EVE SUPPER

The 157th Infantry was billeted in many towns before we received orders to entrain for the port of embarkation. I will relate my experiences in but two of these towns—Cheminon and Pont-de-la-May (a suburb of Bordeaux.)

We stayed in the little town of Cheminon longer than any other place and we were there during Christmas. One of the things that I will always remember was the Christmas Eve supper that Sergeant

Brinson Wallace of Millen, Ga., and I enjoyed together.

I had a room in a French home. A little before dark we got a loaf of bread from the company mess sergeant and bought from a store some French sardines and nuts, and went to our room. The red hot coals in the fire were just right and we sharpened a couple of sticks and toasted some bread, then opened the sardines, pulled an old box up near the fire and spread our Christmas Eve supper on it.

While eating, we talked of the good times we were going to have when we returned home We were just going to eat, sleep, and have a good time. We thought of the many Christmases that we had enjoyed, the presents we received and the bells and holly decorations. But we did not have to have these things then to make us happy; just the thought of the war being over and that we would soon enjoy again the good old times made us feel mighty happy. As we were enjoying our feast our conversation finally drifted to the girls back home.

Just across the hall from us that night was a merry little group. I knocked on the door to return the dishes we had borrowed and when I walked in the room I saw a glorious picture. There sat the father with his wife and three children. Four long years of fighting—four Christmases in succession absent—

and now he was back with them. His return was the grandest present the wife could have received and all the toys in the world could not have made the children any happier. Then I returned to my room and wrote the following letter to my mother:

"France, December 24, 1918.

Dearest Mama:

I have just finished supper. I bet you can't guess what I had. It was raining so I couldn't go out to supper, but stayed here in my room, and Brinson Wallace and I opened a can of French sardines and toasted some bread. Quite a difference from the Christmas Eve suppers I used to have, but I'm happy, and I'm enjoying sitting by the fire thinking of how I used to enjoy the "night before Christmas," a long time ago. So I've spent most of the day thinking of the times that used to be and memories of those happy days have constantly been before me all day, and next Christmas Eve probably I'll look back on how I spent this day, so what I've done today will soon be memories, too.

I spent a part of the afternoon watching a French lady wash my clothes in a little branch that runs just back of the house. They move like a machine. What amused me most was the way she would beat the water out of the clothes with a paddle.

Today seemed long and lonesome until this afternoon when it burst into sunshine, for I received four letters.

Brinson Wallace is staying in the room with me

and sleeping on my bedding roll, and what do you reckon? He went out of doors for a second, and much to my surprise, he brought in a big snowball. He says the ground is covered with snow two inches deep. It's the first snow we've had. Well, Mama, don't worry about me. Just think how glad I'll be to see the home folks. We'll be here in Cheminon until the 15th of January, and then make another move toward home. Have not seen Linton Howard, Frank Miller or Fleetwood Lanier. A heartful of love. FRANK."

Christmas morning I wrote the following home:

"France, Christmas morning,
December 25, 1918.

It is nearly 11:00 o'clock. I have just come back from services that our Regimental Chaplain held in Company "I's" barracks. He gave a mighty good talk. He used to be Assistant Attorney General of Iowa, and also quite a campaign lecturer for President Roosevelt.

After all, today isn't so blue as I thought it would be. The mail I received yesterday certainly was a "life saver." I'm enjoying the day, thinking of my many blessings; of how much I have to be thankful for. I have a "home coming" to look forward to. So many will be left over here. So many of the boys that you knew who were in college with me are buried over here now and many are wounded and many had such narrow escapes. I was with these boys in the class room, I used to loaf with them between classes underneath the large oaks on the campus during the lazy Spring months when our

thoughts were of Commencement time and the summer vacation more than books and they are the same boys that have often been out home, and now how hard it is for me to realize that we won't see some of them any more. Calvin George, from Madison, Ga., who was in my law class, was killed July 28. He was with the 38th Infantry, (3rd Division) and they saw terrific fighting even before our division went into the Toul Sector. Poor George Harrison! Think how he used to throw the old baseball to me at third base, like a rifle bullet! A one pounder hit his right arm and the University's star second baseman of 1912 to 1916 will never throw another ball with that arm.

Clark Howell, Jr., who is a Major now, had some narrow escapes. I heard he had his helmet knocked off by a piece of shrapnel during the Argonne fight. Haven't seen Julian Erwin, Joe Lumpkin, Charlie Martin nor Fred Reid, but have seen lots of boys that I did not know were over here. Wish I could find Watson White and Cranston Williams.

You can imagine our losses when I tell you I saw the graves of five of our officers from the 328th Infantry buried alongside each other. My platoon had fewer casualties than any other, I think, in the regiment. The Mexican that Lieutenant Kirby transferred for one of my men was killed out of my platoon.

At 4:30 my company will have a Christmas dinner. We bought a couple of turkeys and some other things out of the company funds. I'll write you about it tonight. Lots of love.

FRANK."

A LEAVE AT LAST, BUT—

While we were in Cheminon, one of my many applications for a leave actually came back from division headquarters *approved*.

When we were on the British front in the Spring we had our trunks stored and later they were sent to Gievres, a little town in the middle of France. I put in for a leave to go down to Gievres to get my trunk which my mother spent an entire day at Camp Gordon in "packing" and which I had not seen but once since it left the States. The leave was approved December 28th and read as follows:

"Headquarters 40th Division,

December 28, 1918.

Special Orders,
No. 125. (Extract.)

Second Lieutenant Frank A. Holden, 157th Infantry, is authorized to proceed to Gievres for the purpose of locating personal baggage. This leave will not exceed two days. He will not remain in Paris longer than is necessary to make the first train connections.

By command of Major Gen. Strong.
F. H. Farnum,
Act'g. Chief of Staff."

I caught the first train for Paris and from there caught a local; rode almost all day; located my

trunk at Gievres; secured a Ford from the Quartermaster; rode to a nearby town and there boarded a crowded train back to Paris, standing up nearly all the way.

When I arrived in Paris I was almost exhausted. I saw some officers from our outfit who were going on a week's leave; hence I knew we would not move soon. I wanted to see Paris again and also buy some souvenirs. Here let me explain the rules governing American soldiers passing through Paris. When an American arrived at any of the various stations in Paris he had to register with the Military Police, who would stamp on his leave of absence the date and time of his arrival. We were allowed only twenty-four hours there, unless we had a special leave to Paris. When we left the city an M. P. would look at our leave to see if we had overstayed our twenty-four hours. If we had, he would take our names and outfit and it would be reported to our Commanding Officer.

Paris was a great place to meet up with old friends, and while strolling down one of the principal avenues I spotted in the throngs that passed a familiar face. It was Lieutenant Lovick P. Lingo of Milledgeville, Ga. I was particularly glad to see him for he was with the 3rd Battalion of my old regiment, and I had often wondered if he came through alive.

His face fairly beamed with happiness and his eyes sparkled with delight. He had every reason to be jubilant. He was just out of the hospital where he was treated for gas and a wound received at Cornay on the 9th of October, and had just heard the grand news that he had been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, and on top of all that, he was in the city where pleasure and gaiety reigned supreme.

And in this same city of Cornay and on the same day that Lingo was wounded, my first cousin, Lieutenant W. M. Weaver (327th Infantry) was wounded and captured. He and his men were in a house surrounded by Germans and after being ordered to surrender and while attempting to escape from the house Lieutenant Weaver was wounded himself and saw five of his men shot down. When he had gone about twenty feet from the house he was shot again in his side and when he fell a German ran to him and covering Lieutenant Weaver with his pistol carried him back a prisoner. I thought of my cousin as I was talking to Lieutenant Lingo. Weaver at the time was somewhere in Germany with a menu minus breakfast, with cabbage and carrots for dinner, and carrots and cabbage for supper.

"How long will you be in Paris?" asked Lingo.

"Just passing through," I said. "Wish my pass let me stay longer."

"You know Ralph Bassett from Fort Valley, Ga., don't you?"

"Sure; I was in college with him four years," I said.

"Well, he is in charge of the A. M. P. here. He may extend your time in Paris."

I lost no time then locating Ralph. I called on Lieutenant Bassett and walked over near his desk. A Colonel was asking for an extension of time; Ralph (a First Lieutenant) turned him down. When he saw me he told me to pull up a chair and we talked at length.

We were old friends and classmates in college. After talking over old times I said: "Ralph, there are two favors I want to ask of you. First, I am out of money and I am in Paris for my last time. I want to buy a few souvenirs to carry back with me." He said he would be glad to recommend me to the American Express Company. He gave me a letter asking that they cash a check for me up to any reasonable amount, then he put his official seal on the letter and said that I would have no trouble in getting the money, and I did not.

Then Ralph asked what else I had on my mind. I told him that I had been in France nearly a year; had never had a leave granted me, except a day's pass to Nancy, and I wanted him to extend my leave so that I could stay in Paris a few days.

He said that he would be glad to do so and asked to see my leave order. When he read, "He will not remain in Paris longer than is necessary to make first train connections," he was silent for a moment, and then said: "Frank, I can't extend your leave on that order; I can't override a Major General's order, but if you stay here a few days, I will help you all I can." I walked out of his office feeling good. I saw Paris for a couple of days, enjoyed the real sight seeing that Paris affords, enjoyed the many fine dishes she boasts of, bought a lot of souvenirs and returned to my outfit.

Everything rocked along just fine when I first got back to Cheminon. But wait. In about two weeks, one cold, rainy day, some one knocked at my door. It was an orderly from headquarters. He handed me a paper. I signed for it, then walked over by the fire to read it. I did not know whether I had been transferred or promoted. But it was neither. It was from headquarters of the 40th Division, asking me to explain by endorsement thereon, why I overstayed my leave in Paris.

Well, I did not know what to do. I had learned that an army paper, especially an endorsement, ought to be brief and to the point. For once in my life I was going to vary from this rule. I wrote on the back a long answer, telling of the five recommen-

dations for my promotion never going through, how I tried to get back to my division, my long stay in France and never getting a leave while many who applied for leaves after having just landed in France received them back approved. I heard nothing more, so "all's well that ends well."

IN SOUTHERN FRANCE

Finally our regiment received orders to move. After a ride of two days and nights, packed and jammed in box cars, we arrived at Pont-de-la-May, a little suburb of Bordeaux. It was 10:00 o'clock at night when we reached the station and in a downpour of rain the regiment had to march about four miles and locate their billets. I was mighty glad that some other Second Lieutenant this time had the job of billeting the regiment.

But I caught a detail, as usual. I was left at the station to see that the regimental baggage was carried over the next morning. An old lady who was station agent, had some bed rooms over the depot, and I paid her a few francs for a room. I was very tired, so I enjoyed a nice rest in one of those soft French beds.

The next morning I saw the baggage safely to the proper places and began to look for the billeting officer to get a room assigned to me. All of the rooms in the finest houses had been taken. It was cold and

rainy and I wanted to get located as soon as possible. I had learned by this time, though very late, that the best way to get anything in the army was to go after it yourself, so I started out to find a room. Seeing a fine chateau in the distance, I decided to ask for a room there. It was all walled in like most of the fine chateaux. I opened the big iron gate, walked in and rang the door bell. The lady of the house and the maid came to the door. The lady refused at first to let me have a room, but after pleading with her for some time, she told me I could have a room on the third floor.

Well, I felt then as if the Colonel had nothing on me, as my home was the finest chateau in the little suburb. I looked out of my window the next morning and I saw a beautiful girl with large, brown eyes, plump build and a round, happy looking face. She was picking flowers in the garden. She reminded me so much of a real girl—you know what I mean—an American girl.

Sunday afternoon I was invited to have tea with the family. I was very happily surprised when I saw the beautiful girl I had seen from the window in the sitting room that afternoon, and more so when Mrs. Du Sault introduced her as her daughter. Madeline was her name. She could speak a little English but not so well as her mother and older

brother. The little boy, about six years old, could say "hello" and "good-bye," and often used the words at the wrong time. A few minutes after I met the family some friends from Bordeaux came, four good-looking young mademoiselles. You can imagine what a glorious time I had in a room full of good looking girls—sometimes a rare treat even back in the New World.

They asked me how far I lived from New York. I was very happy when I found my home town (Athens, Ga.) in the little boy's geography. They seemed to think that all Americans lived in or around New York City.

Knowing how the French boys like American cigarettes, I bought a box for Jean, the older brother, and after refreshments were served I gave him the box of cigarettes. He, being very polite, passed them first to the girls, each taking one. Mrs. Du Sault joined them in their smoking. When the party was over and I told them all good-bye, Madeline followed me to the hall door. I asked her if she would go with me to a picture show in Bordeaux the next afternoon. "Yes," she said, "but mother will have to go with us."

When I returned to my room, I thought for a long time. I could not put those two things together—a young girl 19 could not go out with a boy unless her

mother went with her, but could sit up in her home with the boys and smoke cigarettes. The next day the girl and I went to Bordeaux and her mother went with us. They helped me select many souvenirs.

Bordeaux did not seem to belong to a country that had been at war. It was a lively city with a population at that time of about 150,000. The French here sounded different from that spoken by the people in northern France. I went into Bordeaux nearly every day.

On my last trip into the city I met my old college mate, Lieutenant Hill Freeman of Newnan, Ga., and he and I looked around the city searching for souvenirs to carry home. We talked a great deal about our homes down in Georgia.

Home was uppermost in our minds. Many times during the day while at Bordeaux a picture of home came before my eyes, and oftentimes at night I lay awake thinking of home and I am sure there were many others thinking of their homes, too, whether it was a "Little Gray Home in the West," or a palace on Fifth Avenue, New York, or a home in Iowa "where the tall corn grows," or a home down in Dixie Land; no matter where it was, it was the best place on earth to us.

Mine was down in Georgia where the limbs bend with juicy peaches and "where the watermelons

grow;'' where stately pines are swayed by mountain breezes on the north and kissed by the ocean winds on the east; yes, down in Georgia was where I longed to be, the greatest place on earth to me, where the honeysuckle blossoms perfume the meadows and the daisies brighten the hillsides; where the sun shines the brightest and hearts are the lightest—my home down in Georgia, that's where I longed to be, in Athens, Ga., where lived the only known sweetheart of John Howard Payne—Miss Mary Harden—to whom he sent the original manuscript of his famous verses, ''Home, Sweet Home.'' Excuse me, please; but remember, while writing, I went back in my thoughts to Bordeaux where we waited so long and became so homesick and I became impressed with the longing I had there for home.

SERGEANT WHITE

Quite a few casuals joined our regiment to go back with us. For every six months overseas we could wear a gold chevron on our left arm and for every wound received we could wear a gold chevron on our right arm. But, though a soldier was wounded two or three times or more by the same shell, he was entitled to wear only one wound stripe on account of these wounds. Occasionally we would see a soldier with two or three wound stripes on his right arm,

and seeing such a sight excited our highest admiration.

One day while we were in Pont-de-la-May a soldier reported to our company who attracted the attention of all who saw him. On his right arm were lined five gold wound stripes. Never before had we seen a right arm almost covered with wound stripes. His name was Sergeant John B. White of Spartanburg, S. C. He was a tall, handsome soldier and limped slightly. He went overseas with the 1st Division.

Some of our officers doubted White's right to wear five wound stripes. They could hardly see how a man could have been wounded on five different occasions. Five wound stripes meant that he had been wounded five separate times, going back to the hospital for treatment after each wound was received. But investigation of the strictest kind never brought anything to light that served to discredit Sergeant White's right to wear the five stripes. I talked to him quite a bit. German bayonets, shrapnel and machine gun bullets left sixty-three wounds on his body. To one disposed to doubt him, the sight of these would have been convincing. A bayonet wound was on his hand. Many of his wounds were so close together that they looked almost like one big wound.

Just before we left Pont-de-lay-May for the embarkation camp, General Pershing reviewed us. We

lined up early on the morning of February 27th for the review. It had been raining quite a bit. We marched by the General several times in different formations in mud ankle deep. After that we were given open ranks and the General walked by us so fast that his aide was almost running to keep up with him. Occasionally he would come to a quick halt and point his finger at a soldier and ask him a question. He asked a few who were wearing wound stripes where they were wounded. Some would say in the leg and others would say at Chateau Thierry. After that, the General went back to the reviewing stand and then called for all the officers and non-commissioned officers to gather around him in a semi-circle. The General wanted to make us a speech.

Sergeant White was confined to his company area that day, but asked his captain if he could go out and see the review. His captain told him he could, but to stay in the background and not be seen. Sergeant White was a fine looking soldier. That morning he shaved close and shined his shoes, and he made a splendid appearance. There were a good many French inhabitants out to see the review. Just as we were going up to hear the General's talk, I saw Sergeant White edge out from behind the spectators. One of the General's aides caught the flash of the five shining wound stripes and went over and met

Seargent
John B. White

General
John J. Pershing

him. As we were waiting for the General to make us a little talk the aide introduced Sergeant White to the General, and there, as they stood facing each other, the General's official photographer took their pictures. And there was Sergeant White, the biggest man of the day, (although under order of confinement to his company street) now standing before the regiment answering the questions of the Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces.

One day as I was whiling away the long hours coming home on the boat, lying out on the deck in the warm sunshine as we were passing through the Gulf Stream, White came up and handed me a picture of our General and himself. The General had sent him several of the pictures. I now have this picture and prize it as much as I do any of my many little remembrances of the war. I often look at it. To me, it is a wonderful picture. In it General Pershing and Sergeant White stand face to face and five gold wound stripes on the sleeve of a Sergeant face four shining silver stars on the shoulder of the Commander of the A. E. F.

When we arrived in New York there were many reporters down at the harbor to interview us, and one began asking me questions.

"Wait a minute," I said, "you don't want to talk to me. Let me introduce you to Sergeant White."

I introduced him to White and the last time I saw the Sergeant he was surrounded by reporters. The New York Herald said that he was a worthy rival of Sergeant York.

During the summer of 1920 while I was eating lunch at a restaurant in my home town, two strangers were at the same table with me and we began talking. When I learned they were from Spartanburg, South Carolina, I told them the story about White that you have just read and after I finished one of the men looked a little sad and said, "I'm glad to meet someone that knew White in the army. His mother is anxious to know more about his brave deeds. He was going to a ball game not long ago from Spartanburg to Greenville and was killed in an automobile accident."

Sergeant White, over the top seven times, with sixty-three wounds in his body, none of which proved fatal, came home and was killed in an automobile accident! Life surely seems strange, sometimes, doesn't it?

White was laid to rest in Oakwood Cemetery, Spartanburg, S. C., May the 14th, 1920. His war record is written on his tomb with the following verse:

"Nor shall your glory be forgot,
While Fame her record keeps,
Or Honor points the hallowed spot,
Where Valor proudly sleeps."

TEN MONTHS' PAY

Here's another incident before I close. A few days before we sailed for the States, I received $2,500 to pay my men their February pay. This was our last pay day while in France, so we were paid in United States money. Some of them had not been paid in several months. One of the sergeants had not been paid since April, and he drew over $300.00. I paid him three one hundred dollar bills and some change. He was an "old Regular Army Sergeant," and had been in the army for ten or twelve years. After I finished paying the men this sergeant asked me to keep the three hundred dollars for him until we arrived in New York. I got out my little note book and put him down for three hundred dollars in the column where I was noting the other money I was keeping for the men.

The next morning the sergeant came to me and said: "Lieutenant, I want to get one of those hundred dollar bills, I need some money."

"All right," I said, "it is yours but if I were you I would not spend it until I got back to the States." I gave him the bill and deducted a hundred in my note book.

That afternoon he came to me again and said: "Lieutenant, I hate to keep worrying you but I want just one more hundred dollar bill."

"All right," I said, "it is yours but I wish I had locked it up so I couldn't give it to you until we landed in New York." I gave him another bill, made a notation in my note book and he walked away saying, "Lieutenant, I won't ask you for the rest until we get on the other side."

The next day one of the corporals came to me and said: "Lieutenant, Sergeant ——— said he did not have the heart to come to you for his last hundred dollar bill, but sent me to ask you to please send it to him, that he needed it right away."

"All right," I said, "it's his. I hate to see ten months' pay go in a day." I gave the corporal the last bill and checked our account even. The corporal said as he was leaving, "The sergeant told me to tell the Lieutenant that he believed his luck would change and that he hoped tomorrow to bring the Lieutenant a barrel full of money."

The next day the sergeant told me that he had lost it all. "Lieutenant," he said, "it would not have been so bad if I had lost the money to the men in our company, but to lose it to the company in the barracks next to ours certainly hurts me."

I was informed by the time we puffed by the Statue of Liberty more than the sergeant's three hundred dollars had been taken from the "company in the barracks next to ours," though not by the sergeant.

A LITTLE DIFFERENT

The following is a letter I wrote to my uncle, John F. Holden, at Crawfordville, Ga., different from the others I have copied:

"Bordeaux, France, Feb. 22, 1919.

Dear Uncle Johnnie:

I am going to write you a letter a little different from most of the letters I've written from France—one that doesn't picture the horrors of war.

First, I will tell you what I saw today. I saw the bodies of fifty-seven men, women and children who died over five hundred years ago. Their bodies were buried in the yard of the Saint Michel church in Bordeaux and were dug up a hundred years ago. Their bodies were preserved by the veins of arsenic and lime in the soil. Today these bodies are standing upright in a circle in the basement underneath the tower of the Saint Michel church. The skin is still on the bodies, and on some of them the hair on their heads is preserved. You can still see the expression on their faces, and some who are said to have been buried alive have an awful expression of agony. I am enclosing a picture of them.

After I saw this most wonderful and strange sight I went to the "Museum de Bordeaux." Here I saw the most wonderful works of art in the world. Some of the paintings and statues were sent down from Paris during the war for safe keeping. The museum is worth going miles to see, and I know it would be great for one who really appreciates art.

Now something about the French people. I have

had occasion to be billeted in a number of French homes since the Armistice. As you know, they are internationally known as exponents of extreme courtesy, politeness and a careful regard for the feelings of others. Really, they are sometimes too polite.

The French are very industrious. They are slow workers, but regular. They are never idle, but are doing some kind of work all the time. But there is one time when all worry and work is laid aside and that is at meal time. Their breakfast usually consists of a big bowl of half coffee and half milk and a "chunk" of bread. I say "chunk," because they usually break off their bread instead of slicing it. Eating is an art with them. At dinner and supper they eat, talk and drink their wine sometimes for more than an hour. Wine is the national drink; some of it is no stronger than our grape juice. They are amazed when we call for water to drink.

I am in the midst of the great vineyards of France. Each vine is cared for as our mothers at home care for their flower gardens.

There is a network of deep and narrow canals in many parts of France. It is a common sight to see two horses pulling a boat of freight on these canals. They make these little rivers run where they want them, often changing their courses.

I wish you could see the wonderful chateaux over here. They are so elegantly furnished. Most of them are walled in and many have lawns and beautiful large shade trees. I know they had great times before the war.

It will not be long before I will be back home

and then I can tell you of France lots better than I can write about it. The death of Uncle Oscar Holden deeply grieves me. Everybody who knew him admired him for his strong mind, high character and frankness. Don't suppose you want to go back to State Senate. Love to all.

FRANK."

Most of the men in my detachment were boys, who had been wounded, gassed or sick; thus most of them had been at death's door since they landed in France. One of the many orders while here was that men who became intoxicated would be assigned to Labor Battalions, which would be the last outfits to leave France. I did not just read this order to my men, but I gave them talks about it. I told them there were anxious hearts waiting on the other side of the Atlantic and they were just as anxious or more to see their boys than they themselves were to get home. I am thankful to be able to say no one in my detachment had to be courtmartialed and transferred to Labor Battalions.

Two and three times a day and perhaps more I look at the present which the men in my detachment gave me after we arrived in New York, and as long as I live I hope to tell the time of day by this watch. This watch and the one I have which my Great Uncle (Governor Alexander H. Stephens) wore during the War between the States and when

he was inaugurated Vice-President of the Confederacy, have a sentiment about them which makes them precious and priceless.

You have nearly finished reading my little story. I did not do much. Many did more than I. In my last letter addressed to "dear home folks," written from France the day before we sailed, among other things I wrote: "My last letter to you from America expressed a desire to do my duty, and after that to return safely home. I have done my duty and now the boat (*The Julian Luckenbache*) is in the harbor nearby which will soon take me back."

Yes, I yet feel that I did my duty and I find this feeling is the greatest reward and consolation one can have here on this earth.

HOME, SWEET HOME

We stayed in Pont-de-la-May until March 3, 1919, and then came our embarkation camp orders.

The Du Sault family helped me to pass away many happy hours that otherwise would have dragged by like days. Later, I had to move nearer the company I was attached to and therefore had to give up my room in the Du Sault chateau but a Sunday afternoon never passed while we were stationed there that I did not enjoy it with them. I was rather sad the last

(U. S. Official)

"Sailing Towards Home, Sweet Home"

Sunday I spent in their home. They saw soon after I met them that I loved "home life" and they did all they could to make my stay with them pleasant. I enjoyed their company so much, especially that of the beautiful girl, Madeline. She picked up quite a bit of English during my stay there. She was very amusing and witty. During my last Sunday afternoon with them they seemed a little sad over my leaving. That afternoon there was another visitor out to see them who had spent some years in London. Madeline and I decided to use her for an interpreter so we three went out in the front yard. I asked her if she was going to write to me and she answered that I had many girls in America and I would soon forget her. Madeline seemed a little sad, too. I noticed she was not as witty as usual, but she was only saving her wit for the last. While passing through the sitting room into the dining room for refreshments, Madeline and I lingered behind and when all had left the room but us, we stopped. While looking at each other, I took her hand and said, "Madeline, it's my last time with you, aren't you going to let me kiss you good-bye?" "Why, no!" she said, laughing, "why should I? I am not your mother."

I have often thought of how she used to tell me of her envy of the happy American girls. One day I

asked her who was her fiancé, and in a very sad way she gave the answer that so many French girls gave when asked that question. If you will imagine that the majority of Americans who went overseas had been killed, and that the majority of American soldiers who were in the camps in the United States who did not go over, and all the others who had registered for service, had been wounded—then you can get an idea of what France suffered.

The next day, March 4th, we started our march to the embarkation camp on the other side of Bordeaux. It was a long march to the camp, but the distance did not matter then, *because we were going home.*

During our stay in the embarkation camp we had many hard details in the rain and mud, but it did not matter then, *because we were going home*

We did not pin the Stars and Stripes to the highest building in Berlin as we thought we were going to do, but we had the consolation of knowing that we could have done it, and were now satisfied and *were going home.*

All of us had not distinguished ourselves in the fighting as we so earnestly desired, but we knew we were a part of something big and great and were smiling and happy, for *now we were going home.*

Some of us had the tedious all night tasks of

making out the passenger lists, but what did we care then, because *we were going home.*

We did not board a George Washington or a Mauretania, just an old slow freighter, but that was all right, because *we were sailing toward home, sweet home.*

And as we slowly sailed out of the Gironde river into the Atlantic, leaving the shores of La Belle France, I had a peculiar feeling which I shall never forget and that last picture will ever be remembered, a picture that is written indelibly on my memory, and that picture is a girl standing on the shore waving us a last good-bye and wearing on her forehead a Red Cross.

Have you wondered what became of Jouffrett? Well, I'm glad to tell you he came through all right

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